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The Shape of Things

THE McMAHON BILL FOR NATIONAL CIVILIAN control of atomic energy, unanimously passed by the Senate at the fag end of a Saturday session, while by no means a perfect measure, is certainly a great advance on the May-Johnson bill, which was designed to keep nuclear physics under strict military guard. If the House, as seems probable, confirms the action of the Senate, the control of all fissionable materials will be placed in the hands of a five-man civilian commission assisted by a nine-member scientific and technical committee, a military liaison committee with power to refer its disagreements with the commission to the President, and a bipartisan joint Congressional committee. This set-up should supply a sufficiency of checks and balances but may prove somewhat cumbersome. While private mining of uranium and thorium will be permitted under license, the commission will be the sole buyer of these ores and will have a monopoly of the production of fissionable materials. The use of atomic devices for peaceful purposes may also be licensed but only after a report on the social, economic, and international effects of such devices has been made to Congress. How free scientists will be to pursue their researches remains to be seen. Much will depend on the caliber of the men appointed to the commission, and it is to be hoped that the President in appointing its members and the Senate in confirming them will act with full consciousness of the responsibility that rests on them. It will not be enough to name respectable stuffed shirts. We shall need commissioners who combine a very broad scientific outlook with first-class organizing ability and, above all, with a sense of dedication equal to the power for good and evil which they will exercise.

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THE TERMS OF THE FINANCIAL AGREEMENT signed by the United States and France follow fairly closely the pattern established in the Anglo-American negotiations last fall. In addition to a loan of $650,000,000, this time from the Export-Import Bank, it provides for a complete settlement of war accounts. The cost of lend-lease material consumed is canceled, and a separate credit of $720,000,000 is made available to cover purchases by France of surplus American war material in French areas and payment for goods supplied to France since the end of the war. A further amount of at least $25,000,000 is earmarked for the purchase of Liberty ships. The total of around $1,400,000,000 falls far short of French needs for rebuilding industry and restoring foreign trade, but it is about the maximum that could be granted without going to Congress for a special authorization. Both Paris and Washington maintain that no political commitments are involved in the agreement, but the loan will inevitably serve to strengthen the ties of France with the West. For one thing, the French government has expressed its readiness to support American proposals for eliminating restrictions on world trade, a program on which Molotov made a scarcely veiled attack in his recent *Pravda* article. French Communists, however, have not followed this lead. On the contrary, while admitting some reservations, they are claiming that the credits were made possible by "the success achieved in the field of production, notably through the efforts of the French Communist Party."

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SETTLEMENT OF THE SOFT COAL STRIKE HAS been greeted with relief and satisfaction from Wall Street to the mine villages. It was a typical compromise, with the miners getting from the government substantially less than they demanded of the operators but winning acceptance of safety guarantees and a welfare fund. Technically the wage increase was kept within the limits of the wage-price formula set earlier in the year and is in fact, no greater than had been originally offered by the operators. In view of the nature of the settlement one may ask why it was necessary to shut down the mines for two months, with tremendous losses to labor, stockholders, and public, in order to arrive at an agreement that should have been possible without a strike. The operators provide the apparent answer in their continued and violent opposition to the section of the contract calling for enforcement of a "reasonable set of safety standards." It is clear that without the strike and consequent seizure of the mines this basic safeguard would not have been written into the agreement; its inclusion even now is proving a serious stumbling block to acceptance of the contract by the operators. Without their acceptance the mines will not be restored to private management. Apart from the operators, the government is chiefly to blame for the long strike because of its

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failure, despite the experience of former coal strikes, to act promptly in seizing the mines. It is to be hoped that the mistake will not be repeated in the case of the anthracite mines, to which Mr. Lewis is now turning his ominous attention.

*

IT WILL BE IRONIC BUT SOMEHOW FITTING if the Ku Klux Klan after a lifetime of lawlessness should, like Al Capone, meet justice in the form of the Collector of Internal Revenue. This appears to be the fate in store for the Georgia chapter, against which the Treasury has just filed a lien for $685,305 allegedly due in back income taxes. Should the Kleagles successfully fight the revenue men in the courts, or raise the required sum by passing the hood, they will find their troubles have only begun. Governor Ellis Arnall, with courage to spare, has instructed the state's legal department to bring action to revoke the Klan's charter on six counts, including misrepresentation, "unlawful activities aimed at the destruction of civil liberties," and violation of state criminal laws. The Governor has also accused the Klan of illegally engaging in political activities, a charge that every Georgian knows refers to the campaign being waged by the hooded gentlemen to return the ineffable Gene Talmadge to the governor's mansion. Should Arnall's move fail in the courts, he is prepared to call an extraordinary session of the General Assembly "to de-hood the Klan and prohibit activities . . . detrimental to the public good." The fact that a Georgia governor can and does stand up to the Klan in this fashion speaks volumes for the progress the state has made during the Administration of Ellis Arnall. We are delighted to note, incidentally, that the Wood-Rankin Committee has decided not to investigate the Klan as an un-American activity. It would be just as logical and just as fruitful for the Klan to investigate the committee.

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THE UPSHOT OF ROCHESTER'S GENERAL strike is a jolt to those who have been viewing the current anti-labor hysteria as the beginning of the end of the trade union movement. When word first reached the Republican municipal administration that a hundred city workers had joined an A. F. of L. union, the City Fathers, backed by local industrialists, sought to nip the budding movement by abolishing 489 jobs at one fell swoop. Later the discharged men were invited to return

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as individuals, with a warning that the union would not be recognized. The men refused to return under these conditions and a picket line was set up, whereupon the police raided a gathering of strikers and hauled away more than 200 of them, half of that number war veterans. When the City Manager refused even to discuss the issue with representatives of the A. F. of L. and C. I. O., the labor groups joined in calling a general strike. In all, 30,000 workers left their jobs. Rochester did without busses, taxis, and newspapers, and many business firms had to close. Concerned perhaps over the political aspects of such blatant strikebreaking in an election year, Governor Dewey intervened to force a settlement, which included recognition of the rights of a municipal employee "to join any organization he pleases which is loyal to the United States" and provided for qualified rights of collective bargaining. The victory was an indication of the potentially great strength of labor when it unites. It was also a reflection of the incredible ineptitude of the local Republican leaders—an ineptitude that so angered the public that not even the powerful local political machine could prevent a demonstration of overwhelming popular support for the strikers.

*

FOR $180 A YEAR OUR READERS CAN subscribe to *American Culture*, the "master magazine." A life term in this particular institution costs only $5,000; for no more than this a well-heeled lunatic can spend the rest of his days mopping and mowing at essays with such titles as Achievement American Industry, Where Goes the World, The Economy, Great Stone Faces—Illustrated, the State—Maine, In God We Trust, and Vanishing Mothers. He may also—and this seems, one must confess, a far, far better thing—read advertisements, cunningly disguised as articles, for which capitalists high and dry in the confiscatory brackets of the income tax may pay two to four thousand dollars a page, and because of which the master magazine cannot legally reach its victims through the mails. The prospectus of *American Culture* is a rich mine of errors in grammar, absurdities, and pretentious humbug of a peculiarly infantile sort; it is sure to seem a fantastic joke to anybody capable of reading a word without running his finger under it. Yet anonymous donors, fascinated by the fact that the magazine will "oppose the subversive forces rampant in the country," are sending it, free, to more than ten thousand of our city or college libraries. The publisher and editor of *American Culture* is Earl Clemens Rayner. Mr. Rayner seems, primarily, a Swift eager to reveal mankind to itself as a laughable collection of fools; but he may, of course, be interested in picking up a little money on the side. His existence definitely disproves the old saying that, though there are many people with a passion for gambling, there seems to be nobody with a passion for running gambling-houses.

Writing on the Wall?

TWO weeks ago the Security Council's subcommittee on Spain faltered along aimlessly as it questioned Dr. José Giral on his government's brief against Franco. It seemed to many in the audience that they were witnessing one of those grim scenes at Geneva when a rising fascism flaunted to arrogance in the face of the helpless democracies. Now it appears that the history of collective impotence may not repeat itself. The report issued by the subcommittee, chaired in its last week by Australia's Foreign Minister Evatt, is a surprisingly firm and candid document. True, it does not call for the immediate action we should like to see. But it does set forth collective measures against the Spanish dictator which if carried out will put a long overdue period to his tyranny.

Accepting the whole damning case against the Franco regime—its fascist character, its record of close war collaboration with Hitler, its ruthless suppression of the Spanish people, its military establishment going far beyond the normal needs of a nation with peaceful aims—the report nevertheless questions whether Spain today constitutes an immediate threat to peace within the meaning of Section 39 of the Charter, the section under which Security Council sanctions might be invoked. The report insists, however, that we have in Spain "a situation the continuance of which is in fact likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security." And for this reason recommends that the General Assembly call upon its member nations to break off diplomatic relations with Franco unless in the meantime the Franco regime is removed and political freedom restored.

Incidentally, the reference to the Assembly is fully in keeping with Mr. Evatt's continuing campaign to increase the prestige of the Assembly, representing all nations, as a democratic counterbalance to the Big Three.

In his reservation Dr. Lange of Poland made a good case in questioning the legal soundness of the position that immediate action by the Security Council was not called for. It is not enough to say as the report did: "No breach of the peace has occurred. No act of aggression has been proved. No threat to the peace has been established." Such reasoning provided the basis for the League of Nations' quiescence as Mussolini prepared for the rape of Abyssinia, and Hitler made ready to bomb the cities of Poland. "Unless threats to peace are taken care of at an early stage while they are still potential and easy to remove," Lange insisted, "the United Nations may find themselves in face of situations beyond their power of control."

But granting the weight of this reservation, the report represents a distinct advance in democracy's long-drawn-out battle against Franco Spain. The very fact that, as we write, Franco's friends in this country are questioning the subcommittee's competence to make recommenda-

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tions and discounting any action the Assembly may take proves they got more than they bargained for. Now the matter is unequivocally the responsibility of the Big Three at the full meeting of the Security Council. During the investigation, neither the State Department nor the British Foreign Office showed the least impatience with Franco's continuing effrontery; at times they appeared almost as his advocates. Now they have the chance to prove whether their earlier anti-Franco protestations were worth the paper they were written on.

The Wages of Folly

HARRY S. TRUMAN has achieved what one would have thought might only be accomplished by war, natural catastrophe, or political genius of an inconceivable order. All unwittingly, he gave common cause—at least for a week—to Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, and Communists; to A. F. of L., C. I. O., and Railway Brotherhoods; to the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Daily Worker;* to Senator Taft and Senator Pepper, Philip Murray and William Green, Harold Stassen and Sidney Hillman, Henry Wallace and Burton K. Wheeler. All these warring forces and incompatible leaders the President, in a stroke of monumental folly, threw into a combination, reluctantly formed, unavowed, and temporary—but squarely directed against himself and portending nothing but grief for his party.

To achieve political effects on so grand a scale Mr. Truman had to make more than an ordinary blunder, offend more than a sector of the population. He did. In as heedless a way as he once announced our intention to keep the atomic bomb to ourselves, he went before Congress and blandly proposed a scheme that might easily have made this country a corporate state. How else describe a system whereby the executive is empowered to seize industries at his own discretion, fix wages and working conditions, draft striking employees into the armed forces, and compel them then to return to their posts at $50 a month or face a court martial?

Fortunately the Senate saved the country from the worst of Truman's proposals. Whether it saved the President himself remains to be seen, but at this moment it is hard to see how he can recover from a blunder more appalling than Hoover's order to run the bonus marchers out of Washington at bayonet-point. In political terms his smashing defeat in the Senate has in fact served rather to compound his offense: he not only attempted an extremely dangerous maneuver, but failed in the effort. The attempt has cost him the support of labor, and the failure has cost him his political prestige.

Elsewhere in this issue Tris Coffin describes the chaos in Democratic circles on Capitol Hill, where overnight the anachronistic Senator Taft has become the key man in legislative strategy, respectfully consulted by leaders of the supposedly majority party. Unquestionably some conservative Republicans opposed the President's emergency program on genuinely constitutional grounds. Others, like Senator Millikin of Colorado may have been sincerely shocked by a proposal "which violates human dignity, human decencies, and fair play." But such moral considerations need not have figured at all in the Republican opposition. For the truth is that the Truman proposals were no more anti-labor than they were anti-management. The wages fixed by government would ultimately be forced on industry, and profits acquired during the period of seizure would go into the Treasury. Thus the salient fact about the Truman move is not that it would have undermined the labor movement, though it would surely have done so, but that it would have made a terrific stride in the direction of the absolute state. Few people in this country are resigned to that ultimate "solution"—and among those who would be horrified by the idea, we suspect, is Harry S. Truman.

Granting the President's sincerity as a friend of labor and his attachment to the democratic way, we can only look upon his wild maneuver as a compound of public hysteria, his own indignation, and the incredibly bad advice of such incompetents as George Allen and John Snyder. The 1948 elections are still far in the offing; the President still has time to pull himself out of the abyss and save his party. The same Republicans whose hands are raised in holy horror over the President's assault on labor are gleefully pushing the Case bill, which would shackle the trade unions permanently instead of on the temporary basis provided in the Truman emergency legislation. The President can send the Case bill back to Congress and let the workingman's new Republican champions expose the depth of their devotion to labor by passing it over his veto. It is too much to expect him to withdraw his own proposal entirely, but he will have grounds for vetoing that, too, if the Senate removes the profits-seizure clause while leaving intact the provision for choking off strikes by injunction. Finally, it is not too much to ask that the President turn once and for all from a clique of advisers whose counsel boils down to the odd formula: please only those who wouldn't dream of voting for you.

Even if Harry Truman should adopt this three-point program, he could hardly expect the unbounded confidence of the liberal and labor forces of the nation; but he would doubtless salvage a large measure of their electoral support, without which no Democrat can carry the northern states. These forces are not likely to be taken in, after all, by the demagogy of the Republicans, and few will follow the willow-the-wisp of a third party. Should the President fail to conciliate them, however, they can stage a political sit-down which—just as surely as their outright opposition—would send him back to Missouri on New Year's Day of 1949.

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Washington Hangover

BY TRIS COFFIN

Washington, June 3

THE wild winds that swept over Washington in a furious blow against organized labor have, for the moment, subsided. The tornado has changed the whole scene.

There were strange freaks of the storm—Claude Pepper, angry and defiant at the Administration, in a huddle with Bob Taft, the shrewd Republican conservative. There was sweeping destruction. The Truman Administration was tossed into the air and dropped with a terrifying thud. The force of the storm literally shoved the power of American policy-making from the White House to the north wing of the Capitol. Organized labor was battered, divided, and driven off the path of progress.

The facts of the exhausting few days beginning Saturday, May 18, are just beginning to be brushed clear. What began days before as a personal feud between Harry Truman and his old friend and counselor A. F. Whitney, of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, had developed into a paralyzing railroad strike. Truman, tight-lipped and furious, was goaded by that morose little man, John Snyder.

On Saturday morning two men were trying to see the President. Senator Pepper, with the blessing of New Deal colleagues, had proposals to end the strike. The other was Harry Byrd, conservative Senator from Virginia. A decision was made. The President would not see Pepper. The door was opened wide for Byrd. He proposed that Truman address a joint session of Congress and demand the same kind of bill that is the law in Virginia—drafting strikers into the army. (It is the militia in Virginia.)

That same morning a worried A. F. Whitney asked friends in the Senate what he should do. All agreed the strike would have to be called off. One adviser suggested a letter to Truman, to be made public, which would say the railroaders would return to their jobs. They would willingly submit to injustices temporarily because, as patriots, they were responding to the call of the government. But they trusted the government would see they got equity in their negotiations. Whitney, who is not a man of great imagination, turned down this bold stroke. He did not want to accept all of Truman's terms. Senator Morse suggested a few minor alterations which would not mean complete capitulation. Pepper wrote in the humble, apologetic tone. This note was sent to the White House via Secretary of State Byrnes. Stories went out on the wires—the strike is off!

The President's press office announced coldly, in response to queries, that Truman had not seen the Whitney-Johnston surrender. He was not interested in looking at it.

Then came the address to Congress, the pell-mell rush in the House to vote "Aye," and the quick trick of Taft in holding up Senate action. Over Sunday the winds shifted. Monday morning a tired, dejected Senator Barkley stood by his desk defending the Truman labor bill. The usual self-assurance and calm authority of the majority leader were gone. He was struck from all sides. Taft, smiling and bright-eyed, teased and then stabbed sharply. What was the final sanction against the strikers who defied the government? Wasn't it court-martial? Revercomb, a Republican from the coal-mining state of West Virginia, stubbornly insisted on pinning Barkley down. Didn't this give the President the right to send a striker to his death before a firing squad? Vandenberg, august and courteous: the President had enough moral authority to have ended the strike problem weeks ago. Democrat Downey of California shouting, ". . . the most dictatorial and harsh law of which human minds can conceive." Millikin, the bald constitutional lawyer with an admiring intent ring of Senators around him, saying, of the Truman proposals, . . . "anti-constitutional, brutally sadistic." Over in the House remorseful Congressmen said piously, "I am for labor."

Truman himself was uneasy when on Monday he saw three Senators. Kilgore, the West Virginia Democrat, pleaded with him to withdraw the bill. Truman said wistfully he would like to but if he did John Lewis would not sign a contract.

Later that day two veteran Democrats, Wheeler and O'Mahoney, went to the White House. Wheeler, who has considerable influence with Truman, talked turkey. "You are committing political suicide and killing every Northern Democrat in Congress. Take us off the spot. Pull out the bill."

The President agreed but late that night called Wheeler at home and told him his advisers were against it. They were John Snyder; George Allen, the clownish RFC director; and Attorney General Tom Clark.

The Democrats made one last effort to save the day. Wednesday afternoon at five, the Senate was scheduled—under a unanimous-concent agreement—to vote on an amendment throwing out the draft section of the Truman bill. The last thing the Democrats wanted was a vote. Tydings moved to adjourn and was supported by Barkley. But the Republicans raised such a clamor about the sanctity of unanimous consent that both Tydings and Barkley withdrew. Then it was murder. Truman got thirteen votes—ten dyed-in-the-wool Southern Democrats, Barkley, Scott Lucas of Illinois, and Carl Hatch.

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But thirty-four Democrats, including seven Southerners, voted against the Administration. Among them were McKellar, the presiding officer, and Hill, the Democratic whip. Few Presidents have been so soundly slapped.

The wind shifted suddenly on Friday. President Truman at his press conference criticized the Senate and solemnly announced he was not withdrawing or changing his bill. It was too much for Senator Barkley. Truman had gone too far, even for the good soldier. That afternoon in the Senate Barkley was once again the self-assured commander. He, not Truman, was calling the shots. Barkley drove the Senate to the adoption of some weakening amendments, held the line against others. The balloting on Friday was a pattern for future American policy. The liberal strength on one vote sank to as low as twelve. This included the two Republican liberals Aiken and Morse, plus Taft. Taft stuck to his new friends on five out of six ballots and was able to bring over as many as fourteen middle-of-the-road Republicans. But without organized party support the coalition could not hold more than thirty-four votes. The amended Truman bill was passed sixty-one to twenty. In the twenty were thirteen Democrats, six Republicans, one Progressive.

John L. Lewis is now the cock of the walk. While Whitney was castigated on four radio networks as an enemy of the nation for refusing to tell his workers to return, Lewis, who acted in identically the same manner, got his coal contract signed in the White House.

The New Dealers are depressed. They don't know whether to leave the Administration or go underground and burrow from within. Some, like Chairman Murray of the Senate Labor Committee, hope they can get Truman to change his course and his advisers. Many of his associates consider Murray an optimist.

Henry Wallace has made a great personal decision. It is more important to offer counsel and leadership to the bewildered, divided liberals than to play the cards close to the belly and hope for the 1948 nomination. He has no intention of resigning posthaste from the Cabinet, but, instead, will attempt calmly and clearly to state his views on every major issue that arises.

If Harry Truman doesn't like it and tries to shush him, then he can look for a new Secretary of Commerce.

American Liberals and British Labor

BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Professor of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, author of "The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness" and other books

THERE was bound to be considerable tension and mutual dislike between Britain and America in post-war years. The one nation had lost power in the international community through the exertions of the war; the other had gained it. The relations between the two nations today, in both their causes and their consequences, are not unlike those which obtained between Britain and France after the last war. The friction is augmented by the fact that the United States lacks the experience to wield the phenomenal power which the war has thrown into its lap. Our political influence is derived from our military and naval power, real or potential, which in turn is derived from our technical efficiency. It has not been achieved by the slow accretion of authority through successful manipulation of power.

America's intellectual unpreparedness for its role in world affairs was fully revealed in the Senate debate on the British loan. In this debate many of our chosen representatives displayed such abysmal ignorance of the problems which a very wealthy nation confronts in dealing with an impoverished world that the loan would have been defeated but for the skilful leadership of Senator Barkley. British resentments against our ignorant pretensions and irresponsibilities, long smoldering, were fanned into flame by this debate and will probably become even more explicit when the House begins to air its views.

One might have hoped that American progressive opinion, seeking to discern the purposes of the British Labor Party, would have bridged this chasm of national misunderstanding. But it has not done so. The chasm between British labor and American labor and liberal opinion is almost as deep as that between the two nations.

The British Labor Party has been in power for almost a year. During that time it has consolidated its position, already fairly secure by reason of its five-year parliamentary tenure. It is the first labor party in the democratic world to gain this unequivocal lease on authority, as it is also the first to deserve it by becoming the instrument of a clear majority in the nation, comprising middle-class as well as industrial-labor elements. It has moved steadily forward in its program for nationalizing banks and mines and has maintained and extended a program of exercising political controls over the basic economic relationships of society within the framework of freedom, which is the ostensible purpose of all democratic socialism and of the less explicitly socialistic American progressivism. Our nation, in comparison, is harassed in meeting its post-war problems by irrelevant laissez faire

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ideologies; and our progressives cannot be certain that the ambiguities of New Deal progressivism may not be reduced to a consistent liberal-conservatism. For the conservatism of America expresses itself in terms of classical liberalism. Jefferson is appropriated by Herbert Hoover, and the early democratic fight for a free economy has become, in this period of late capitalism in America, a fight of large aggregates of economic power against attempts of the community to check their power. This development causes a tremendous sense of frustration among American progressives, which does not, however, prevent them from being unduly critical of British Labor's policies. British Labor may be right in suggesting pointedly that the frustration of American progressive thought is partly the cause of its hypercritical attitude toward British Labor.

In foreign policy the Labor government has had the almost impossible task of relating an impoverished nation and a shaken empire to the new realities of the world community. Among those realities is the rise of two very powerful nations, one of which has little sense of direction, while the other betrays an increasing lack of any responsibility for maintaining accord between the great powers. The British government has the task of eliminating the oppressive aspects of empire without liquidating the securities of this complex of power. Naturally the task involves it in some serious contradictions. Its strategic needs in the Mediterranean have prompted policies in Italy, Greece, and the Near East which do not commend themselves to democratic opinion, in either Britain or America. It has been slow to substitute more democratic foreign policies for Churchill's discredited monarchism in Italy and his abortive course in Greece.

On the other side of the ledger are some very great achievements. The agreement reached with Egypt must possess some merit or it would not have earned Churchill's denunciation as a piece of "shame and folly." India has been offered freedom without qualifications. It has so far been prevented from accepting the offer by the intransigent separatism of the Moslem minority, which should prove to American critics of British policy in India that the communal cleavage there is deeper than they have been willing to admit. But no American critic has yet offered a confession of error.

The Labor government has brought consistent pressure upon the Dutch for a democratic settlement of their imperial problem. For this it has received little credit from American liberals. Nor have they appreciated the peculiar position in which Britain found itself as agent of the Allies in accepting Japanese capitulation in Indonesia.

The friction between Britain and America on Palestine is part of the general picture. Britain possesses quasi-sovereignty there, while American Jewry, as the only potent representative of world Jewry, has greater interests in Palestine than any similar group in Britain. This is an intolerable situation for which the only solution is increasing harmony between the two nations in wielding the political power of Britain and the economic power of America. The joint Palestinian commission of the two nations was a necessary first step toward a common policy. American liberalism has been rightly critical of Attlee's reluctance to carry out the recommendations of the committee, but it has not been equally critical of the reluctance of America to assume continued responsibility for the economic and political reconstruction of the Near Eastern world, without which a generous policy toward the Jews becomes an insufferable policy toward the Arabs. It may be observed incidentally that the critical attitude of most Americans toward British policy in Palestine is a potent cause of friction between Britain and America, only equaled by the traditional anti-English resentments of the Irish.

If we seek for the special reasons why American liberalism is unable to understand the complexities of the British task—beyond the general causes of anti-British sentiment which liberalism unfortunately shares with the nation as a whole—we may find them in two sources. One is the abstract character of American liberal idealism. The other is the fantastic devotion of a portion of the American left wing to Russia as the fixed pole of political virtue.

American liberalism, partly because it is impotent and frustrated and partly because it has learned scarcely anything since the eighteenth century, has little understanding of the fact that politics are morally ambiguous even on the highest level. It does not understand that politics deal with power and that inequalities of power in any given situation introduce moral irrelevancies which cannot be completely overcome. Furthermore, politics never achieve a clear triumph of the general interest over a particular interest, but at best merely the highest possible concurrence between a particular interest and the general welfare.

Lacking understanding of the obvious facts, American liberalism would solve the problems of imperial power simply by liquidating empire. It does not understand that every community, whether imperial or national, has a strong survival impulse, and that not even the most idealistic political party can simply negate it and survive as the bearer of the national will. Nor does it understand that such a liquidation of empire might not be in the general interest. A power vacuum might be created which would bring in greater confusion rather than a higher integration of the international community.

American liberalism is equalitarian without understanding there are functional and fortuitous inequalities in even the most ideal community, whether national or international. Democracy must bring all power under social control, but this will never be done absolutely;

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so that some power will be ethically used only if it is under the check of self-control. This applies to the relations between strong and weak nations just as much as to groups of unequal power within a nation. British idealism thinks primarily in terms of the responsibilities of power; American idealism thinks primarily in terms of the disavowal of power in order to escape its corruptions. British liberalism rightly detects an affinity between the American idealist's belief that power should be disavowed and the American cynic's desire to use power irresponsibly. The two, taken together, make for irresponsible international politics.

In the same manner American idealism is libertarian without understanding the relation of freedom to the necessities of the community. We are the only nation which seriously entertains the idea that unrestricted liberty would automatically serve the purposes of the larger community. American progressivism rejects this idea in national politics but still clings to it in international politics. The late Wendell Willkie, for instance, spoke of the necessity of an international freedom which would guarantee that no soldier would be quartered anywhere upon foreign soil.

The ambiguities of politics are unfailingly recognized in British practice though frequently obscured by "British cant" in theory. The Continental resentment against this "cant" has a certain justification, though it must be observed that the greater degree of moral cynicism in the political theory of the Continent has led to a lower level of political practice. Hypocrisy is the tribute which self-interest must pay to virtue. If the tribute is not paid, self-interest may express itself more nakedly. American criticism of British hypocrisy is unjustified, for this cant is in fact Anglo-Saxon rather than British. We have our own version of it. The more our economic power grows the more we are inclined to assume that political power, being more overt, is less ethical than the more covert economic power. This illusion is generally shared by American liberalism and is one of the most fruitful sources of friction between the two nations, which are enacting on an international scale the old tension between the landed aristocrats and the rising bourgeoisie. The British own more castles than we; we, increasingly, own the mortgages to these castles. We do not quite know whether we ought to resent the fact that we do not live in the castle or rejoice that we have the mortgage. In this moral predicament we resolve our difficulty by calling attention to the fact that the owner of the castle has not liquidated serfdom on his estate, but we do not mention that the owner is in danger of becoming our serf.

The other reason for liberal hostility to Britain is much simpler. A large part of labor and liberal thought in America has committed itself to Russia to such a degree that every issue of international relations is judged by Russian criteria. Thus American progressives can stage a "Win the peace" conference, as they did in Washington recently, in which a covert effort is made to defeat the British loan and almost every implication of British foreign policy is criticized without a suggestion of criticism for a Russian policy which has brought the whole of Eastern Europe under Russia's sway. Russia's power is exercised with few, if any, scruples of democratic justice. American liberals all believe, or profess to believe, in freedom as well as justice. They naturally desire, as even those of us who do not share their illusions desire, to find some way of getting along with Russia. But they refuse to believe that there is anything in Russian policy which makes that difficult.

Subsequent historians will probably record this strange preoccupation of Western liberals with Russia as one of the queerest phenomena of twentieth-century history. It will not contribute to peace, for no final accord between nations can be achieved upon the basis of obvious illusions.

Whatever the reasons for the failure of American progressives to understand the purposes and the difficulties of British labor, we should seek for a higher degree of appreciation. This is important for many reasons, not the least of which is that the British Labor government has a better chance of helping continental Europe to escape both reaction and communism than any other force. The ideological map of the world is very interesting. One of the great powers wants to preserve democracy without socialism. Another has sacrificed freedom for collectivism. The third, together with the Scandinavian nations, is seeking for a synthesis of freedom with social control of economic processes. This is also what the continent of Europe, or at least Western Europe, seems to desire, despite the present confusion of its politics and the chaos of its economic life. It is in the interest of both world peace and the survival of democratic civilization that the Continent should not be forced to make a choice between reaction and communism but be allowed to chart a political course in which the Scylla of tyrannical political power and the Charybdis of tyrannical economic power are avoided. Britain has not yet played an unequivocal role in helping the Continent to achieve this end, but it is increasingly recognizing its proper role. It cannot fulfil its function if that part of American opinion which, despite confusion, has essentially the same objective fails to support it. An American liberalism which supports totalitarianism on the one hand and fails on the other to set up every possible check against a ruthless display of American economic power will earn the derision of the world—and lose its own self-respect. It may try to salve its conscience by offering the world irrelevant schemes for world government, but its essential bankruptcy will not finally be obscured by such manifestations of abstract idealism.

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Colonel Peron's New Order

BY VIRGINIA PREWETT
Buenos Aires correspondent for the Chicago Sun

Buenos Aires, May 27

AS BUENOS AIRES is polishing and gilding itself for Colonel (retired) Juan Perón to take over as the elected chief of state on June 4, five major policies seem clearly set for the new administration. First, Perón intends to get all the advantage possible out of the world tension now being increased by all Russophobes, using it to play off the United States against Russia. Second, Perón is turning his personal attention to tightening the bonds with the nearby South American countries which Argentina has long attempted to weld into an "austral bloc." Third, he is solidifying his power on the home front by setting strict controls over all the organizations that sparked the recent electoral opposition. Fourth, decrees have already been issued giving the incoming regime complete control of the economic life of the nation. Fifth, and most spectacular, Perón's political brain-trusters are swinging more and more toward the centrist dissident Radicals led by Vice-President Hortensio Quijano, and these dissident Radicals are fighting a province-by-province battle with the more energetic leaders of the pro-Perón Laborista Party, who are now anxious to share in the spoils of the victory they helped Perón win.

This antagonism burst into open conflagration on May 17 when police charged and fired on a Laborista crowd in Cordoba. The Laborista leaders, after the arrest of more than a hundred party members, sent the following telegram to President Edelmiro Farrell and Colonel Perón: "In this moment, which should be one of general rejoicing, the barbarous police are beating women, men, and national representatives. The shadow of counter-revolution is closing down on Cordoba."

Perón and other officials received the Russian trade mission here with the utmost cordiality. Yet shortly before their arrival on April 20 Perón asked John Moors Cabot, the American chargé, to come to see him and suggested that the United States tie up with him against Russia. Cabot replied that he did not see how Russia could be considered a danger and emphasized the defensive strength of the inter-American system. In this conversation Perón spoke of General George Brett as the "perfect Nordic" and mentioned "geophysical considerations"—two well-worn terms of Nazi ideology. What Perón obviously wants from bargaining with the United States is to save his Nazi friends while getting the weapons the Argentine army so desperately needs.

The real touchstone of Argentina's world relations continues to be the position of the German Nazis here. Our new ambassador, George Messersmith, has come with the assignment of seeing that Argentina fulfils its Chapultepec pledges to root out the dangerous and virtually intact Nazi bridgehead, but he is not to tangle with Perón. Recent Argentina court decisions have turned back the German properties that had been seized and have freed a jailed spy held for deportation. Ludwig Freude, who claims to be a genuine democrat but is wanted by the United States government for deportation as the most dangerous German here, continues to be a personal friend and occasional host to the newly elected President. Freude, it is reported on excellent authority, is willing to ditch all the other Nazis in order to save his own position. However, we have still failed to root out quite a number, notably Heinrich Dörge, whose close connection with the planning of the recent economic laws was so plainly indicated by informed sources that he felt called upon to issue a personal denial of it.

In polishing Latin American relations Perón is personally seeing to it that Brazil is kept buttered up; for instance, he issued a written order to his Propaganda Office that his "Shirtless Ones" should give the Brazilian ambassador, Baptista Lusardo, a rousing welcome on May 18.

Genuinely democratic little Uruguay, long the refuge of the opposition to both the Argentine and the Paraguayan dictatorship, was first softened up by being for months denied vital wheat, until it had to appeal to the Combined Food Board for relief and got a promise of aid. Next, representatives of the reactionary and fascistic Herreristas of Uruguay were received in Buenos Aires with all honors and are now actively trying to elect the next President of Uruguay. Already such pressure has been brought on Uruguay that radio stations broadcasting underground programs to Argentina and Paraguay have been closed down. This means that the last free voices in South America have been silenced.

The idea of a South American customs bloc is persistently agitated here. Perón himself brought it up in a recent interview with Peruvian newspapermen, mentioning especially Argentina's need for Chile's minerals. Bolivia, meanwhile, has sent its Minister of Commerce, Jorge Sanos Cramer, to Buenos Aires to negotiate for Argentine foods and arrange to divert to Argentina, when our present agreements end, Bolivian tin and rubber now exported to the United States. Little Paraguay will be sewed up with the recent ten-million-peso loan;

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it is now being wooed with decorations for the military clique that holds the country in a tight dictatorship.

Meanwhile on the domestic front decrees nationalizing the Central Bank, giving this bank control of all the banks of credit, and establishing strict exchange control supply the new administration with all the power it needs to control Argentine economy to the last flip of the wheel. The bank measures open the way for the regime to continue its deficit spending and huge military program. Exchange control makes it possible for the brain-trusters of the Central Bank to carry out their ideas of speeding Argentine industrialization.

The Argentine Democratic Union has been dissolved, and the opposition as such has made only one important open move since the election. This was the traditional official charge of the Radicals that the election was stolen through smooth padding of the electoral register. Opposition Representatives have a plan to snipe at the regime from Congress by proposing social and economic laws even more extreme than anything thought up by the Peronistas, thus forcing them to go beyond their own program or appear to be checking the wheels of progress.

The political parties have evolved, since the election, a realistic plan of working for a victory in the Congressional elections two years hence. However, a monkey wrench has been thrown into this scheme by the sudden passage on May 15 of a decree ordering that all political parties be completely reorganized under the control of federally appointed authorities within ninety days. This law, which gives the government absolute control of the activities of political parties, caused a national and international furor when first passed last year, and it was revoked during the brief eclipse of Colonel Perón in October. Ostensibly it has been reimposed to enable the regime to deal with the revolt of the Laboristas. Actually it gives the pro-Perón dissident Radicals led by Vice-President Quijano a perfect mechanism with which to take over the entire party machinery of the Radical Party. Traditional Radical leaders today are in a panic over the way the ward politicians are taking the rank and file with them into the camps of the Perón Radicals and see the new law as realizing Perón's old dream of controlling the Radical Party. To offset this development, the young Radical fire-eaters are seriously thinking of taking up the rebellious Laboristas' offer to combine forces in opposition. These fire-eaters are relatively few, however, and the Laborista rank and file are a completely amorphous mass which can easily fall apart once official favor is withdrawn.

So far the pro-Perón dissident Radicals are winning over the Laboristas and even making heavy inroads on the traditional Radical politicians through control of the spoils system. But the Laboristas are in no mood to give in easily. They control absolutely only one provincial government, that of the important Buenos Aires province. On May 18 this provincial government, as its first official act, served notice on the national government that it was challenging the constitutionality of the recent decree nationalizing the control of bank deposits. This action was universally interpreted here as meaning that the Laboristas are not going to take a brush-off lying down. Their leaders have talked of staging a march on Buenos Aires of the type that brought Perón back from political exile last October 17. This could have little success, however, if the police turned against them as they did on May 18 in Cordoba.

Internationally, the Perón regime is stretching forth an official arm in friendliness to everybody—with a slight accent on Brazil and Russia. Perón has long been an exponent of the theory that Argentina will have to choose between the United States and Russia, and he is in effect waiting to see which will make him the best offer. He hopes he can get the terms he wants from us. Meanwhile the growing possibility that Argentina will soon resume direct relations with Russia is sending Russophobes in our State Department into new paroxysms of insistence that we must do all the business possible with this man who used attacks on the United States as one of his chief campaign weapons.

Virtually all the organizations that spearheaded the resistance to the military regime have already been brought under official control. The universities have been put under the direction of federally appointed officials. The Central Bank, which made the mistake of refusing an official loan beyond the constitutional amount, has been nationalized. On strong official hints, the Stock Exchange and other financial associations have elected new pro-Perón officers. *Critica,* the paper that in the final stage of the campaign made the most outright attacks on Perón, ceased publication voluntarily soon after the elections, unable to survive the effect of a fine imposed for failure to comply with the controversial wage-bonus law, which has since been declared unconstitutional by the lower courts. To sum up, the only forces in Argentina not hemmed in by official controls are underground.

The Argentine underground is looking forward to a long uphill struggle and is cutting out dead wood. Whether it will be able to accomplish anything remains to be seen, since the attention and sympathy of the world, which aided it so much in the earlier struggle, are entirely lacking in the present situation.

The United States is no longer discussed in Argentina as a world force for democracy. Our latest about-face on Argentine policy, coming after so many others, has made what we do seem of little importance to the democratic forces. Rightly or wrongly, they now accept it as an established fact that our desire to trade in the Argentine market is greater than our desire to follow a consistent political line.

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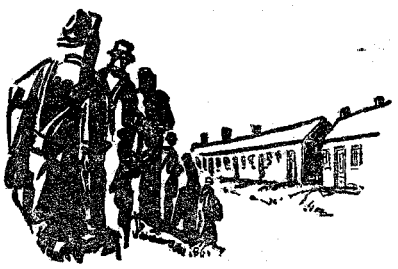

Small-Town America

BY ALDEN STEVENS

I. Dalton, Georgia

PEOPLE around here used to think mill hands and factory workers didn't amount to much. But they know different now," said a man who had worked for forty-three years at the Duane Chair Company's plant at Dalton. The new dignity of the working people in this Georgia town of 10,000 exemplifies what has been accomplished in many places in the South.

Dalton differs from any other Southern industrial town only in being better organized than the average. In the business section Hamilton Street, named after a local industrial family, is a wide treeless avenue paralleling the railroad tracks. It is lined with squat, drab stores, from which the taller Hotel Dalton sticks up near the station. Scattered over the greener, hilly part of town are the three largest Dalton mills—Crown Cotton, Duane Chair, and American Thread—each with its dingy rows of company houses along back streets.

There is an atmosphere of hard work in the town. The garish green, red, and blue neon signs are turned off early, and even beer is unobtainable. The 7 a.m. starting time at many of the mills makes for early bustling traffic. The two-shift system is still in effect, and some of the mills are working a six-day week.

I called on the Otis Weavers in their neat, white company house beside the railroad. A train momentarily prevented conversation, seeming to come in one window and go out another. But this tall, slender man and his trim, chubby little wife were pioneers in Dalton union organization, and they talked long and freely about the job that had been done.

Weaver really is a weaver—a highly skilled operator—at the Crown Cotton mill. "There were no unions to speak of in Dalton before President Roosevelt and Section 7-a of the NRA," he said. "But we got started right quick after that. None of the managements would even talk to us at first. It was the same at each plant—we'd get it organized pretty well and then we'd have a strike. The strike at Crown lasted eighteen weeks. The company tried to bring in strike-breakers, and five hot heads beat up the manager. They got off easy. The judge fined 'em a dollar a piece. We had the police department and a lot of the town against us at first. But one grocer gave food to men on the picket lines and unlimited credit to strikers' families. Never crowded us to pay back, either. The members didn't forget him; they still buy from him, and now he's got a real big store in a fine brick building and he owns quite a lot of property and we elected him ordinary."

Mrs. Weaver is an inspector at Crown. "When I started eighteen years ago we got $9 a week," she said. "Now we get $28 for a forty-hour week. You'd think they could see what they have gained, but there are still four or five women in my part of the mill who have no use for the union. It used to be that if there was a girl the boss liked he'd throw you out and give her your job. And when you got old or something happened, they wouldn't want you around any more and they threw you out. That's all over now."

The Dalton mills have yielded to the C. I. O. on other points, too. Crown now gives paid vacations and a small Christmas bonus. As for the company houses, Weaver says with a slight smile that "they've been putting a little work on them in the past few years."

The furniture workers at the Duane Chair Company's plant organized later and have had a contract for only a little more than two years. Eva Armstrong said they had less trouble than the textile mills: the town was conditioned to unions by then, and the merchants realized that higher wages to workers meant more business for them. The Duane workers got a contract without a strike. Since Negroes, in spite of the FEPC, do not work in textile mills here, this local is the only one in town with Negro members; of the twenty Negroes employed at Duane, sixteen belong.

Dalton has very little unemployment partly because, as the now inoperative Chamber of Commerce used to say, Dalton is the "Bedspread Center of the World." There are more than sixty bedspread factories, the largest employing 800 people, some of the smallest ones half a dozen or less. Within a radius of twenty miles approximately 20,000 people are engaged in this remarkable industry, which has mushroomed from a handicraft in fifteen years. Tufted bedspreads, bath mats, seat covers, and chenille bathrobes are strung up along all the roads for sale to tourists.

The bedspread industry in Dalton is unorganized. The C. I. O. regards it with a little disbelief. "It can't last, not the way it is now," said Charles Gilman, regional director in Atlanta. The expectation is that when the present high wages go down, when the industry begins to lag, the C. I. O. will move in. Most of the workers are from the surrounding countryside. Right now a good operator can make up to $12 a day, while a union weaver in the other textile mills seldom exceeds $45 a week.

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Roosevelt gave these unions their chance, and the members will never forget it. The United Nations they regard as his, and they watch it hopefully. Of Governor Arnall, Weaver says, "There's nothing wrong with him—or if there is he's kept it under wraps." The union men elected their entire slate in the last municipal election. Otis Weaver is the first union man in Dalton to be a police commissioner, one of three. And there are union men on the town's new planning commission. The unions have backed almost every civic improvement in Dalton in the past eight years. They worked for a medical center, and for a badly needed new sanitation system. They got nutritious 15 cent lunches for school children. The C. I. O. National War Fund was the most important war-relief agency in town.

What has happened in Dalton is what the C. I. O. hopes will happen all over the South. A new kind of citizen is developing, an educated and responsible citizen. The Dalton mill hand that people used to think didn't amount to much now knows how his community operates, and how his state and his nation and the world operate. What is more, he takes an active part in their operation. He is still a little surprised when a bank president or a city official asks his opinion. He gives it freely, now that he is not merely a factory worker but a member of an organization which is powerful in Dalton and throughout the country.

And as Otis Weaver says, "Union organization in Dalton is well rooted. You couldn't tear it out with anything less than an atom bomb."

[*Mr. Stevens has been making a fifteen-thousand-mile motor trip through the United States gathering material for this series of articles. He is the author of "Arms and the People."*]

Inside German Politics

BY SAUL K. PADOVER

Author of "Experiment in Germany: The Story of an American Intelligence Officer"

I. Alignments and Trends

ONE of the most significant developments in Germany is the gradual emergence of political consciousness and political conflict. The paralyzing apathy of the Hitler period, while still affecting large sections of the population, is slowly giving place to a participation, or desire for participation, in public affairs. The Germans still have a long road to travel, but the important thing is that they have begun the journey. In a recent survey 60 per cent of the persons interrogated thought that political activity was somehow desirable; 40 per cent were hostile or indifferent. But the gap between thought and action is still wide. In the same poll 95 per cent admitted that they were not politically active in any way.

The poll also threw light on the people's attitude toward political parties. For over two decades, it should be remembered, the Nazis carried on a smear campaign against all political parties in order to discredit the democratic processes. Hostility to a multi-party state is still, in fact, the basic tenet of the Nazis-fascists, and many Germans, especially the younger ones, condemn democracy mainly on the ground that it tolerated parties. The standard Nazi-fascist-conservative argument against the Weimar Republic is that it permitted "thirty or forty parties, which meant anarchy." Among the German youth the older ones are still firmly attached to the Führer principle—regardless of who the Führer might be. Asked how many parties there should be in the Reich, about one-fourth of a carefully selected sampling of adults declined to answer—caution or no opinion?—and another fourth favored one party or none at all. Nearly half replied that there ought to be about four political parties. Only 1 per cent thought there should be no limit on political movements.

In actual fact, with the blessing of Military Government, there are in Germany today four major political parties, two on the right and two on the left. The two main conservative parties—included in them are crypto-Nazis, Pan-Germanists, militarists, and clericalists—are the Christian Social Union and the Christian Democratic Party. A third, the so-called Liberal Democratic Party, represents the big-business outlook and has but a small following; its slogan is "Freedom," which is explained as meaning the abrogation of all government regulations in the economic sphere. On the left the workers and liberals are grouped in the two traditional labor parties, the Social Democrats (S. P. D.) and the Communists (K. P. D.) The struggle between these two parties, now squaring off for a slugging match, may decide the future of Germany and perhaps of all Europe.

Some indication of the political drift in Germany can be obtained from the results of various surveys and local elections. I offer a word of caution, however, about the elections. Germans went to the polls because they were ordered to, not because they were anxious to express preferences. Some thoughtful Germans are convinced that Military Government has a mechanical concept of democracy and that it made a mistake in ordering elec-

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tions so soon after the defeat of the Nazis. They argue that it is unrealistic to expect a nation steeped in fascism for twelve years to be capable of democratic decisions. In truth, many anti-democratic individuals have been elected to positions of power in the Reich. In Bavaria especially the worst sort of reactionaries won fairly and squarely. To many a philosophical-minded German this looks like a case of "democracy" destroying democracy.

Taking Germany as a whole—outside the Russian zone, where the situation is exceptional and for which reliable figures are not available—we find that the trend is definitely to the right. In one poll approximately 54 per cent of the sampling questioned favored conservative parties and 46 per cent leftist ones. There are, of course, regional variations, due mainly to the economic structure and the people's religious affiliations. In the last local elections, for example, agricultural Catholic Bavaria voted 75 per cent conservative; industrialized Hesse 44 per cent Social Democratic. The strength of the right is actually greater than appears from the bare election figures, for millions of rightists—Nazi Party members and assorted militarists—have been temporarily disfranchised. The German Communists have trailed far behind all other important parties. In Baden they received less than 6 per cent of the last vote and in Greater Hesse a little over 8 per cent. Outside the Russian zone they seem to have no great following. This, however, does not mean that they have no future.

The causes of this rightward swing are extremely complicated. For one thing, it is a reaction from Nazism, which Germans consider a radical-revolutionary movement. Hitler, they say, was a true revolutionist and his followers were "idealists." The left, moreover, is identified with violent experimentation, and the Germans want no more violence, especially of a political nature. (Like other defeated people, Germans are concerned with the immediate problems of sheer existence; a poll showed that one out of four worries about food, one out of six is afraid of unemployment, one out of seven is troubled by a lack of housing.) Finally there is widespread hostility to Russia, and consequently to communism, caused both by a dozen years of Nazi propaganda and by the misbehavior of Soviet troops.

An analysis of political attitudes shows that the so-called left draws its strength from men rather than from women, from Protestants rather than from Catholics (three out of four Catholic churchgoers vote conservative, three out of four non-church Protestants vote leftist), and from persons between the ages of thirty and forty-nine. Policemen, professional people, business men, and apprentices—in that order—vote conservative; laborers, skilled artisans, and the unemployed support the left.

Many middle-class Germans support the Social Democrats because the word "democracy" is fashionable. As for "socialism," that was popularized by the Nazis, who incorporated it in their party name. A political party that combines two such fetching labels has a powerful appeal. Recently I interrogated a number of ex-soldiers who told me they had voted Social Democratic. I discovered they were heavily tainted with Nazism. They neither sympathized with democracy nor knew the meaning of socialism. They simply felt that Social Democracy sounded good. "It's just like what you Americans have," they said proudly.

Today the Social Democratic Party is waging a determined struggle against the Communists on the question of the so-called merger. In the Russian zone the fusion of the two left-wing parties has been put through. Now the Communists are making every effort, propagandistic and organizational, to unite the workers in all Germany in one great party, the Sozialistische Einheits Partei. In the English and American zones the S. P. D. is resisting this Russian-inspired pressure with force and not without success. But as in the pre-Hitler days, the conflict between the two labor parties is creating an atmosphere that is not healthy for democracy.

The German Communist Party is insistent upon carrying through the merger for three reasons—one politically sound, the other two opportunist and cynical. The Communists say that the union of the two left-wing parties is necessary because the Nazi-fascist-militarist elements form the most powerful group in Germany today; unless the left fights in a united front, fascism will never be eradicated in the Reich. They are certainly not exaggerating the strength of the enemy—the Social Democrats themselves do not deny that the Nazi-fascists are still mighty and influential—but an anti-fascist front does not seem to be the K. P. D.'s main object. Though the Communists are in a minority, they want to gain control of the labor movement by taking over the Social Democratic Party. And as usual they are more concerned with advancing Soviet interests than with fighting fascism. Recalling the Weimar experience, Social Democrats are convinced that the Communists are essentially anti-democratic, that they fight Nazi-fascism not out of love of liberty but out of a desire to substitute one form of dictatorship for another. Rightly or wrongly, the Social Democrats are convinced that the Communists are not independent agents but instruments of Moscow policy. Would the Communists be so desirous of a merger, the S. P. D. asks, if the situation were reversed—if the Social Democrats were a minority and the Communists a majority?

Whatever the arguments for and against the merger, it is not popular with the rank and file of labor. A poll among the western Social Democrats showed that it is opposed by three out of four Socialist workers.

[*Next week Mr. Padover will discuss the S. P. D. program and leadership.*]

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The House on 92d Street

BY CAREY McWILLIAMS
Author of "Brothers Under the Skin" and "Southern California Country"

Los Angeles, May 27

IN 1941 Henry Laws, a Negro resident of Los Angeles, built a small home on a lot he had purchased at 1235 East 92d Street. As soon as the house was completed, the Laws family moved in: Henry and his wife, Anna; their daughter, Pauletta Laws Fears, and her husband, Anton Fears; another daughter; one grandchild; and Alfred Laws, a son. The original deed for the lot on which the house was built contained a provision that the premises should not "be used or occupied by any person not of the Caucasian race." While Alfred Laws and Anton Fears were serving with the armed forces, a suit was brought and an injunction issued to prevent the family from using or occupying the premises.

The Laws family made every effort to rent or to buy another house so that they might comply with the court's order. They put advertisements in the Negro press; they interviewed real-estate agents; they spent their evenings and week-ends looking for a home. But between 1940 and 1944 the Negro population of Los Angeles had risen from 63,774 to 118,889—an increase of 86 per cent compared with one of 10 per cent for the white population. Between May 1, 1944, and October 31, 1945, Negroes, though they constituted but 7 per cent of the total population, filed 46 per cent of the applications for public housing in Los Angeles. Unable to find a place to move to, the Laws were haled before Judge Allen Ashburn on November 30, 1945, found guilty of contempt, fined, and imprisoned.

While the facts were by no means exceptional—many similar situations have arisen in the last few years—the Laws case upset public opinion in Los Angeles. Under the circumstances it seemed rather tough to jail a respectable Negro family, the adult members of which were either working in war plants or serving with the armed forces, for the offense of living in a home which they had built on property which they lawfully owned. A "Committee for the Defense of Henry Laws" was promptly formed under the chairmanship of Daniel Marshall, the energetic and forthright leader of the Catholic Inter-Racial Council of Los Angeles; the committee retained the law firm of Katz, Gallagher, and Margolis; and in a matter of days the Laws family was released on a writ of habeas corpus issued by the state Supreme Court.

This "house on 92d Street" may make legal history. The case represents the culmination of a fight against restrictive covenants carried on by Negroes in Los Angeles in the past several years. More suits contesting restrictive covenants were filed by Negroes in the courts of Los Angeles County in 1945 than in all the rest of the United States. At present some forty of these cases are pending. The so-called "Sugar Hill" case, which was pending when the court issued the writ releasing the Lawses, derived from an attempt by white property owners to enjoin Negro occupancy of homes in a section of the city into which wealthy Negroes in the motion-picture industry, including Hattie McDaniels, had moved some years ago. Judge Thurmond Clarke met the issue head-on in the lower court by holding that restrictive covenants violated the Fourteenth Amendment. In *Hill* vs. *Barbe* the Negro litigants seek a broader interpretation of the doctrine of "changed circumstances" as applied in restrictive-covenant cases.

Appeals in these three cases will be heard by the Supreme Court of California in June. The Negro litigants in each are represented by Loren Miller, who has led the fight against restrictive covenants in Los Angeles with consummate skill. The three cases bring before the court for consideration most of the important issues involved in restrictive covenants—their constitutionality, their application and construction, and their enforcement. A majority of the court, including Chief Justice Phil Gibson, are liberals. In the well-known case of *James* vs. *Marinship* the court ruled that the Boilermakers' Union could not Jim Crow its Negro members. If a trade union cannot segregate its Negro members, pursuant to rules and by-laws which legally constitute a contract between the members, can property owners segregate Negro residents by contractual agreement? This is the issue that Chief Justice Gibson and his colleagues must decide.

The appeals now pending in California are the first involving restrictive covenants to reach a state Supreme Court since the war. Since many suits attacking such covenants are before the lower courts of Michigan, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, and the District of Columbia, and some of them are on appeal, a sweeping victory in California might tip the scales in a dozen jurisdictions.

The restrictive covenants found in most urban communities today are a result of the influx of Negroes from the South during and immediately after the First World War. In the ensuing struggle for housing they were used to keep the migrants from spreading out beyond the area of original Negro settlement. Before World War I more than half the Negroes in Chicago lived in areas less than 50 per cent Negro, but by 1930 more than two-thirds were living in black belts. Approximately 97 per cent of the Negroes in St. Louis are now hemmed in

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by a wall of restrictive covenants. Nevertheless, Negroes have slowly and doggedly expanded the extent of these black belts. In not a single city have restrictive covenants actually prevented growth of the Negro section; they have simply retarded and impeded it. During the period between the two wars the courts met the social issue by utilizing the doctrine of "changed circumstances" to effect some slight relaxation of covenants. But the wave of new Negro migration during World War II, coupled with the general housing shortage, has created tensions which the "changed circumstances" doctrine, even when liberally applied, has not mitigated.

Much misunderstanding exists about the legality of restrictive covenants. During the First World War the Supreme Court of the United States ruled, in the case of *Buchanan* vs. *Warley* (1917), that cities were powerless to zone residential areas on the basis of race. After this decision, white property owners sought to achieve by the device of restrictive covenants what cities were unable to do by direct legislation. Later the court inferentially upheld these restrictive covenants in the case of *Corrigan* vs. *Buckley*, and a pattern of segregated housing was set up. In segregated schools and segregated public conveyances the courts have ruled that the segregated group must be provided with "separate and equal" facilities, but residential segregation has been sanctioned with no thought of requiring "separate and equal" living space for Negroes. This curious situation has been justified by the courts on the theory that the Fourteenth Amendment proscribes only discriminatory action by the states, not by individuals.

In the California cases it is contended that judicial action is state action and therefore falls within the prohibition of the Fourteenth Amendment. And, indeed, the Supreme Court has frequently ruled that judicial action may constitute state action within the meaning of the amendment: it did so in the Mooney case, the Scottsboro case, the Bridges contempt case. Admittedly, the refusal of a landowner to sell a home to a Negro, like the refusal of an innkeeper to serve a Negro, is essentially a private act. It does not require state action, judicial or otherwise, for its accomplishment. But the situation is different in restrictive-covenant cases. Since the seller is obviously willing to sell to a Negro, the wrong arises solely from the intervention of the state, through its courts, to prevent consummation of the agreement. In the appeals now pending in California the state Supreme Court has been given, in the parlance of lawyers, "a clear out." The court is not being asked to decide against a clear moral wrong and an admitted social evil, or even to enunciate a new principle of law; it is being asked to correct a basic misinterpretation of the law. The whole question of segregated housing is clearly before the court for decision.

Other restrictive-covenant cases are also pending in the California courts. On returning from three years' service in the army Dr. DeWitt Buckingham, a prominent Negro physician, purchased a $19,000 home in an upper-class Berkeley residential area. As soon as he moved into the property, seventeen members of the Claremont Improvement Association brought suit to have him evicted. Dr. Buckingham promptly announced that he intended to find out whether a man who had served in the army for three years could be evicted from a home which he had lawfully purchased. He further announced that at the trial of the case he intended to demand scientific proof from the seventeen indignant plaintiffs that they were members of the Caucasian race. It is interesting to note that Dr. Buckingham has been inundated with letters from white residents of Berkeley offering financial help and moral backing.

Under Articles 1 and 55 of the United Nations Charter the United States is pledged to promote universal respect for the observance of "human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." Under the Act of Chapultepec, the United States agreed with the other signatory nations "to prevent with all the means in their power all that may provoke discrimination among individuals because of racial and religious reasons." Can the courts continue to remain indifferent to these solemn declarations of public policy? In his closing brief to the Supreme Court of California, Loren Miller succinctly stated the issue: "It is an anomaly that the United States, the most democratic nation in the world, is the only nation in the world where a citizen can be deprived solely on the basis of his race and color of the right to live in his own home."

The French Elections

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

Paris, June 1

TO UNDERSTAND the political implications of the French elections, one must keep in mind the electoral campaign of the last three weeks. Contrary to general expectations, the fight has centered not on the constitution, which seemed to have divided France into two clearly defined camps, but on the issue around which all European politics have crystallized since the end of the war—the struggle for power between the left and the right.

As for the constitution, the two left parties have reached a measure of agreement that concessions will have to be made to those who voted "no" on May 5, and that it was hardly worth while to have invited defeat because of intransigence on certain points which are unessential but nevertheless go against the grain of the majority of the French people.

With the constitutional issue in a subordinate place in the campaign, the struggle between the left and right has assumed an extraordinary vitality. For the first time since the

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liberation, French reaction has appeared on the scene in full force. If in the referendum the reactionaries and some of the left appeared to be voting together against the constitution, in tomorrow's elections the split between left and right is so sharp that the results must be considered decisive for the future of France.

People who are not too familiar with the intricacies of French politics have perhaps attached exaggerated importance to the Socialist-Communist quarrel; apparently they believe future collaboration between the two parties has become impossible. For a Socialist Minister publicly to denounce the Communist Vice-President of the government as a deserter would normally have provoked the most serious consequences. But Le Troquer's attack on Thorez did not produce a ministerial crisis, nor did it lessen the almost 99 per cent probability that the Socialists and Communists will again work together in the new Cabinet. Three days after the incident Socialist Minister Jules Moch, who apart from his own authority in the party is generally considered the spokesman for Léon Blum, emphatically declared that the Socialists would never enter a government without the Communists and that collaboration between the ministers of the two working-class parties was essential for the continuation of the social and economic advances realized in the past year. In less direct language Félix Gouin said the same thing. And the Socialist paper, *Le Populaire*, which had just published a series of articles by Daniel Mayer, general secretary of the party, attacking the Communists' tendency toward hegemony and absorption, played down Le Troquer's speech because of the bad effect it had had among the rank and file. Although at the recent extraordinary congress of Montrouge the majority of the Socialists favored "frank and serious criticism" of Communist tactics, they nevertheless resent having their party look as if it were participating in what the Communists call "the united front of Vichyism and anti-Bolshevism." The rank-and-file Socialist does not want to be a puppet of the Communists, but on the other hand he has learned enough from the past not to fall into the same error of systematic anti-communism that sapped the strength of the labor forces in the thirties and made fascism possible.

The Communists, on their side, have quickly realized that they cannot treat the Socialists as a minor party. At the same time they understand that their slogan in the referendum campaign, *"Thorez au pouvoir,"* frightened a considerable section of the voters, who saw in the Socialist attacks something more than a simple electoral maneuver. The strategy of the Socialists was in part an effort to win the votes of the radical wing in the M. R. P. by appearing to dissociate themselves from the Communists; but it also contained an element of bitterness and resentment for the contemptuous way in which the Communists had referred to the insignificant "Social Democrats." In the light of all this, the reaction of both parties to Le Troquer's brutal speech was very wisely restrained and indicated that the Socialists and Communists will be less quarrelsome as June 2 approaches than they were at the beginning of the campaign. The Communists also realize that the success of the French-loan negotiations in the United States has strengthened the position of the Socialists and increased the tremendous personal prestige of Léon Blum in France.

But, above all, the fact that reaction has thrown all its effectives and reserves into the campaign has obliged the left parties to unite despite their differences. In February the French Institute of Public Opinion gave the new rightist Republican Party of Liberty, the P. R. L., no more than 8 per cent of the parliamentary seats; by March the figure had already jumped to 12 per cent, and now, on the eve of the elections, it stands at 18 to 20 per cent. Men who under a more thorough and logical purge would have suffered the same fate as Pierre Laval are vociferously campaigning under the P. R. L. banner. Though there are genuine Resistants in its ranks, the Republican Party of Liberty represents potentially the French version of fascism. Left versus right—this is the real issue on which the people of France will vote on June 2.

June 3

Paris seethed with excitement yesterday, as loudspeakers throughout the city announced the various returns, but in a flying trip to different sections of the capital I did not witness a single incident. There was only a wave of restrained indignation when it was announced that Daladier and Reynaud had been elected; the general comment was: "There are imbeciles who would vote even for Pétain because they once heard he was a great general." Until two in the morning right-wing supporters had a good time. The Continental edition of the *Daily Mail*, which goes to press at 2 A.M., carried the headline, "Right Parties Gain in French Elections." But by dawn those who had had the conviction and endurance to wait for later returns knew that the gain had been held to moderate proportions. Although the final results are not yet known, it is already clear that yesterday's elections have not changed the general composition of the Parliament. The three parties that constituted the majority in the last Constituent Assembly together retain their former strength. The Republican Party of Liberty, which had tried to rally all the forces of the right, will be but a poor fourth in the next Assembly.

While the Socialists lost ground, the Communists increased their popular vote. Two interpretations of this shift have been advanced: some believe the results of Léon Blum's mission came too late to have the effect observers had predicted; others believe a good number of Socialists who favor close collaboration between the two parties and resented last week's polemics voted for the Communist Party, which had made unity one of its major electoral slogans. As for the unexpected success of the M. R. P., the explanation is to be found, above all, in the militant address delivered by Pope Pius on Sunday. The Vatican has gone all-out in an effort to contain the advance of the progressive forces in Europe. There was not a single Catholic in France who did not go to the polls, and cables from Italy report that "Catholic priests and nuns, in response to Vatican instructions, turned out in large numbers to vote."

The failure of the Herriot Radicals to obtain the gains which many had anticipated proves there is little place in today's Europe for vague, contradictory liberalism. The M. R. P. is a reality; it has behind it an active political institution, the Catholic church. The Radicals have only the principles of the 1875 constitution.

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EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

The Nullification of Potsdam

A FEW days ago Lieutenant General Lucius D. Clay, American deputy military governor for Germany, ordered a halt of all reparations shipments from the American zone except for material already allocated. "Our primary purpose," he explained, "is not to bring pressure on anyone. We are thinking of the day when the zone may have to stand alone." Since the American zone of Germany cannot raise enough food to feed its population and also lacks most of the raw materials needed for its factories, it can only exist by paying for necessary imports with industrial products. The alternative is the indefinite continuance of American doles.

The situation in the British zone is similar, for while it is potentially better provided with raw materials, it is worse off agriculturally. Lack of food is proving the most serious handicap in raising the production of coal, greater supplies of which are urgently needed to stoke the economic recovery of Western Europe. Even to maintain the present near-starvation ration of 1,000 calories daily Britain is financing imports into its German zone worth $280,000,000 in the present year. This is a burden the hard-pressed British taxpayer cannot long support, particularly as most of these supplies have to be paid for by drawing on dwindling dollar reserves. In these circumstances, the British command in Germany is expected to follow the American lead by postponing further reparations deliveries until some definitive decision has been reached about Germany's economic future.

It would appear, therefore, that the Potsdam program is doomed to be nullified even more quickly than was the Versailles system, thanks as much to its inherent economic weaknesses as to the quarrels of the victors. At Potsdam the Big Three sought to profit by the mistakes of 1919. Instead of assessing reparations as a global sum, which could only be paid by expanding German productive capacity, they decided to divide up a proportion of Germany's industrial equipment.

The Potsdam agreement provided general directives, and the task of drawing up a "plan for reparations and the postwar level of German economy" was left to the Allied Control Council in Berlin. But when the Council's economic experts got to work they found great difficulty in determining how much industrial equipment could be removed or destroyed while leaving "enough resources to enable the German people to subsist without external assistance." The Russians, acutely conscious of the enormous economic losses they had sustained at Nazi hands, maintained that very little would be enough; the British, aware that the reduction of Germany to a subsistence standard would harm the whole economy of Western Europe, wished to be much more liberal; the Americans were divided, first supporting the Russians and then the British.

The resulting compromise was sufficiently severe in that it proposed the halving of German's pre-war industrial capacity and allowed for a standard of living 30 per cent below that of 1938. Proposed cuts in capital-goods industries were particularly drastic, with steel reduced to 39 per cent of pre-war (1936) capacity, light metals to 54 per cent, basic chemicals to 40 per cent, machine tools to 11.4 per cent, heavy electrical engineering to 30 per cent. Light industries were given much higher quotas or were unrestricted, but as the London *Economist* has pointed out, "It is a fallacy to suppose that consumers' industries can work at full capacity, or even at two-thirds of their capacity, if the supply of capital goods is reduced to slightly more than one-third of normal."

For this and many other reasons, the *Economist* of April 6 concluded the most detailed analysis of the plan that I have seen with the opinion that it was "negative, restrictive, and basically unworkable." This may be exaggerated, but it is generally agreed that the plan is only practicable on the assumption that Germany is treated as a single economic unit. That has not been done so far, for although Potsdam provided for centralized economic machinery, the French representative on the Control Council has vetoed all proposals to this end on the grounds that the Ruhr problem should be dealt with first. As a result Germany for the past year has been, in effect, four separate countries. There has been practically no exchange of goods between the zones, and in each the occupying power has dictated such economic policies as have been developed. The Russians have been moving rather rapidly toward an integration of the economy of their zone with that of Russia, and the French, to some extent, have been following suit. The Americans and British have been drifting, taking day-to-day measures while waiting for an implementation of the Potsdam agreement.

Obviously this situation cannot continue long. The Potsdam program assumes unity among the occupying powers, as well as German unity, and if neither of these conditions is forthcoming the political and economic reorganization of Germany is bound to follow entirely different lines. General Clay's order indicates that the United States is at least preparing a hedge against the collapse of the Potsdam system. The British, who have hitherto always strongly resisted any move toward the dismemberment of Germany, now seem to be resigning themselves to that solution of the problem. An article in the May issue of the authoritative magazine *The World Today*, published by the Royal Institute of Foreign Affairs, reached the conclusion that a united Germany, economically capable of standing on its own feet, would also be strong enough to rearm. The price of security, therefore, was either the reduction of Germany to an economic slum existing on foreign subsidies or partition. Pointing out that the "economic and cultural reorientation now proceeding is, month by month, hardening the distinction between eastern and western Germany," the author of the article plumped for the second alternative. He advocated inclusion of the Russian zone in the economy of Eastern Europe and suggested that the three western zones should form a state whose fortunes would be linked with those of Western Europe. In terms of economic geography there is much to be said for this proposal, but the very drastic changes it will make in the *political* geography of Europe are likely to postpone its realization.

KEITH HUTCHISON

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

The Blind Leading the Blind

Nothing will hustle: at his own sweet time
My father and his before him humanized
The seedy fields and heaped them on my house
Of straw; no flaring, hurtling thing surprised
Us out of season, and the corn-fed mouse
Reined in his bestial passions. Hildesheim
Survived the passing angel; who'd require
Our passion for the Easter? Satan snored
By the brass railing, while his back-log roared
And coiled its vapors on St. Gertrude's blue stone spire:

A land of mattocks; here the brothers strode,
Hulking as horses in their worsted hose
And cloaks and shin-guards—each had hooked his hoe
Upon his fellow's shoulder; by each nose
The aimless waterlines of eyeballs show
Their greenness. They are blind—blind to the road
And to its Maker. Here my father saw
The leadman trip against a pigpen, crash,
Legs spread, his codspiece split, his fiddle smash . . .
These mammoth vintners danced their blood out in the straw.

ROBERT LOWELL

War and Its Aftermath

THE LAST PHASE. By Walter Millis. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

ECLIPSE. By Alan Moorehead. Coward-McCann. $2.75.

TOP SECRET. By Ralph Ingersoll. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.

THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN. By Crane Brinton. Harvard University Press. $2.50.

BRITAIN, PARTNER FOR PEACE. By Percy E. Corbett. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

MR. MILLIS'S brief book is of very great merit indeed; yet I cannot think it is of much importance to *Nation* readers at this date. It is a wonderfully lucid account in five firmly organized chapters of the events in the western theater of the war from June, 1944, to May, 1945. It represents what one may call the official view of the strategy and tactics employed on both sides, admixed with no political speculations and with an absolute minimum of descriptive digression. It is an admirable job, clean and swift in its telling; that is all that need be said.

I should hardly be inclined to say more of Mr. Moorehead's "Eclipse" if it were not so superior to the average war correspondent's book. It covers the campaigns from Sicily to the liberation of Denmark and the German surrender, and throughout bears the marks of a distinguished personality. It is not only in the ease and precision of his writing that Mr. Moorehead excels. He is so sensitive and mature an observer that one constantly feels, no matter how many books of this sort one may have read, that one is seeing the whole period afresh. Mr. Moorehead takes a British view of strategy, though there is no dogmatism or constriction of outlook and appreciation in his account. It is the human aspect of the tragedy that he sees, but unlike some "humanists" he wastes no time on trivia.

To Mr. Moorehead the major problem of Europe is that which follows from the moral degradation and material ruin of Germany, and not Western relations with Russia. Mr. Ingersoll places this latter question in the forefront and declares that the absolutely essential element of any valid solution is a total rejection of every entanglement with Britain.

Make no mistake about it: Mr. Ingersoll has written one of the most brilliant and provocative books about the war that has yet appeared. It is unlikely that anything so brutally frank and so violent will be published in a long while. The majority of the reviews that I have read have evaded the main issue of the book by concentrating upon the author's scorn for Eisenhower and Montgomery. It is as well, then, to set it down simply and squarely.

Britain, Mr. Ingersoll argues, at all times fought the war with a political intent that constantly prejudiced the chances of speedy victory. Concerned with its position in the post-war world, it was obsessed with the maintenance of Mediterranean power, desired to invade Germany through the Balkans in order to frustrate Russian expansion or political influence in that region, and was opposed to an irruption into Europe via the northern French coast. Its strategy was consistently anti-Russian. British leaders sought by obstinacy, diplomatic finesse, trickery, and deceit to counter and nullify the American strategy, which was rational and non-political. British inefficiency and excessive caution contributed to the same end.

That is not an unfair statement of the author's main contentions, and I will say at once that its central point is undoubtedly true. There was a characteristic British strategy, and its central conception was that the post-war threat to the Empire and to the pre-war order of European society would be the Soviets and communism. Its unrealism consisted in this, that the predominance of Russia in Europe was the logical consequence of the defeat of Hitler. The fact should have been accepted as inevitable. And this, if true, must always be borne in mind when we are considering post-war problems.

A reviewer's task does not end with setting down and appraising an author's main thesis, however. The way in which he argues it, his temper, the judgment he brings to the assessment of complex events, is of the greatest importance. And here I should say that Mr. Ingersoll so resembles the Orangeman who declared that all theology was a Catholic racket that I wonder he does not suggest that the Channel tides were a British conspiracy. Again and again the objective reader will be forced to say that the facts, as set down in "Top Secret," are no illustration of Mr.

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Ingersoll's premise. A case in point, and there are many such, is his view of the irruption into Germany itself. The British proposal, in 1944, to force the entrance by the northern route through the Netherlands was anti-Russian, the author says, for London's object was not merely the defeat of Germany but to reach Berlin before the Russians and to secure control of the German coast. It does not occur to him that Bradley's plan for a forcing of the southern route, had it been followed to success, would not have conflicted with those alleged intentions. Had Bradley's proposal been backed, the American armies might well have brought about a total collapse of the enemy, in which case the British armies would have swept, or would have been swept, into much the same coastal positions they were eventually to occupy. So, too, the German collapse which Mr. Ingersoll believes might have been achieved in 1944 would have resulted in a disposition of Allied power in Germany far more favorable to the British intention. It is surely evident that the British pleas for the northern route were based upon traditional strategic conceptions, which may be equated with ignorance if one wishes; distrust of Bradley's chances, which may be regarded as bumptious insolence; and prestige, an inadmissible sin of British pride.

It is the same with many of Mr. Ingersoll's judgments on tactics and the capacities of generals. That Bradley, the author's chief, was the most brilliant of the Anglo-American leaders is hardly to be doubted; that Montgomery is a very unpleasant egotist and an overrated soldier is also true. But the case against the British is written with such crackling, even sneering violence and with such rash judgment in technical matters that the real force of the book is diminished. It is impossible not to believe that the drive in this book derives not only from his perception of a cardinal fact but from less rational, emotional sources. Those sources are, I believe, his moving devotion to General Bradley, nationalism, and the confused and ambivalent political excitement which is manifest in the closing chapters.

In these closing chapters Mr. Ingersoll attempts to point the lessons of the war. I quote in the author's italics:

> *During the war the British attempted to manipulate our military policy so that we would fight the war the way they wanted it fought—which was an anti-Russian way. They did not succeed. Now, with equal determination, they are attempting to manipulate American foreign policy to link our future irretrievably with theirs. If they succeed, and if there is a third world war, we will surely fight it for them, against the Russians.*

Again there is an important truth in this. But the Orangeman in Mr. Ingersoll is still at his elbow. It is, surely, a pitiful mistake to see the present American opposition to Russian policies as nothing but the consequence of a British seduction of American innocence. To reject this view one has only to look to the Far East, where our policy exhibits identical characteristics. Ambivalence and confusion are so evident on every page of these closing chapters that if one desired mercilessly to satirize the author one would need only to set down consecutively the contradictory propositions which are implicit or explicit in them. If "we" do not use our influence, Britain's concern with what it regards as the

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Russian threat to the Empire will surely bring war. At the same time Russia is a centripetal (the author's word), non-expanding power, which therefore can be no threat to the Empire. Russia is a peaceful country, but Mr. Ingersoll is opposed to giving atomic secrets to it. The Soviets have given up their international revolutionism, but it is the duty of America to force Britain to accept in Europe a social structure which will be a compromise between the prevailing Western view and communism. At the same time we should not be too concerned about the possible demise of parliamentary institutions.

In all this confusion, this pseudo-Marxism and pseudo-nationalism, the colloidal cornerstone of Mr. Ingersoll's fantasy is a false image of America. What is America? one asks. What are the social forces and the political chances summed up in this "we"? And why does Mr. Ingersoll tell us that this socializing moderation is our role when he admonishes us to have no faith in the U. N.'s powers to solve the world's problems because "these are dependent upon three great national wills which cannot be held together by any organization or piece of paper"? The powers, he says, will never surrender their sovereignty, and therefore he urges us to insist upon an Anglo-Russian compromise in social matters, while we tell Britain bluntly that all disputes between it and Russia are no business of ours.

Communism is, I believe, a rigorously logical doctrine. So, too, is liberalism. They exclude surreptitious commutation between each other. To integrate the logic of left-wing socialism is less easy, but if we attempt to build a radical socialism upon an emotional bridge between the two first doctrines, we shall merely light votive candles to incompatible ideals that the gale of discord will surely blow out.

It is, I suggest, as impossible for non-Communist socialists and liberals to say that Britain is always wrong as to say that Russia is never right. And it does not do to overlook the fact that American disinterest in the British Empire is of itself insufficient to prevent the emergence of an Anglo-American "bloc." Professors Corbett and Brinton, though they would deny that such an association must necessarily be anti-Russian, both argue for what in effect would constitute a bloc. Neither takes much note of the fact that Moscow will have its own opinions as to what is an undesirable association. Mr. Corbett, who writes clearly and forcefully about external affairs, pays less attention than Mr. Brinton to Britain's interior problems. His "The United States and Britain" faces this dilemma, that the social route taken by British Labor may hinder the emergence of the Anglo-American association. He is therefore inclined to play down the Labor Party's socialism, and he seriously underestimates the necessity of radical reforms in Britain. Both authors see that the British Empire is necessarily in process of change, as Mr. Churchill angrily points out in defiance of Mr. Ingersoll's assertion to the contrary. But neither of the two writers on Britain is aware that the logical and emotional gulf between communism and socialism is so wide that any practicable British policy may of itself fail to guarantee comfortable relations with the Soviets. I would urge *Nation* subscribers to read the three last authors.

RALPH BATES

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BRIEFER COMMENT

Ah, Brave New World!

REGIONALISM, which stresses the interaction between man and his environment within a specific geographic area, is one of the more meaningful of contemporary approaches to an understanding of America. The American Folkways series, of which Carey McWilliams's "Southern California Country" (Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, $3.75) is part, is a systematic application of the regional hypothesis to American life. Like other historical series, the Folkways volumes are of uneven merit; however, the present study of the California area south of the Tehachapi range is a highly satisfactory account.

Beginning with a chapter on the geographic background, McWilliams has described the life of the region from the time it was inhabited by the Indians of the pre-Columbian era until the days of Garbo, Aimee McPherson, and the ham-and-eggs movement. While the author has done little spade research, he is familiar with most of the literature written about the region, and his synthesis is something more than adequate. There is, too, some excellent writing in this volume—which tends to compensate for a rather clumsy compromise with academic techniques whereby McWilliams, quoting extensively from secondary sources, barely identifies them. Nor does the absence of a bibliography contribute to the enlightenment of the reader. Yet the net cumulative effect of the material presented is that of a highly credible characterization of a most incredible region.

McWilliams believes that geographic influences, in the long run, will prove more determining than ethnic factors in shaping Southern California culture. His account of how Indian civilization was succeeded by Spanish, and Spanish by Anglo-American, and how the cultures of such ethnic groups as the Chinese and Mexicans have almost entirely vanished, is a challenge to the much-propagandized sentimental view of ethnic cultures as surviving and even flourishing in the American environment. In this connection, the sections which debunk the Mission legend and the highly romanticized Spanish tradition in Southern California are excellent.

The author anticipates the survival of a regional culture in Southern California which will derive its distinctive character from the unique geography of the area. At times he seems to underestimate the possibility that, with further development in the means of communication, the role of geographic factors as cultural determinants will be transcended. This, however, is a relatively minor defect in an otherwise noteworthy volume. EDWARD N. SAVETH

Down with Functionalism!

I REMEMBER with what fascination I read Camillo Sitte's "Art of Building Cities" nearly forty years ago. He made me understand what I had felt obscurely: why the formulas of Haussmann, excellent in themselves, had on many occasions lamentably failed. So I heartily welcome this English translation, competently done by Lieutenant Charles T. Stewart, U. S. N. R., with introductions by Eliel Saarinen and Ralph Walker, and a supplementary chapter by Arthur C. Holden (Reinhold, New York, $5.50). On the face of it Sitte's book is a back number. He is little concerned with hygiene, transportation, or economics; he is attached to the traditional styles; he worked before the skyscraper became a menace and the automobile a decisive factor. His book is really a monograph: how to compose a plaza so as to provide a proper setting for a given edifice. A building designed irrespective of its site ("passe-partout"), a plan drawn without any relation to buildings (Burnham's weakness), cannot reach perfection. An architectural view should be guided by the same artistic rules as a camera shot: there are angles more interesting than others. The gridiron plan is of course an abomination. But Haussmann, continuing L'Enfant and the great planners of the baroque and classical eras, may also lead us astray. There is no doubt, for instance, that the plaza in front of Notre Dame in Paris is too large, and that the other buildings are obtrusively massive, pretentious, and commonplace.

It is a monograph then, but a monograph with a philosophy. For Sitte planning is not merely a technique but an art. He frankly seeks pleasure in beauty. I may be, with James Branch Cabell, the last fossil defender of Art for Art's Sake, in this world of Marxians, profiteers, and functionalists. Beauty is not a function; beauty is not a racket; beauty is not a by-product. And I shall not let Stalin, Hoover, and Le Corbusier bluff me out of my senses.

The message of Sitte will of course be particularly applicable to the salvaging and reconstruction of ancient cities in Europe. But, as Holden shows, it is of importance for us also. It does not interfere with efficiency. Even Florence would be all the better for super-highways—provided you do not route them through the Ponte Vecchio. Public buildings should not be placed flush with rectilinear streets, nor isolated in an enormous open square. Each should be set in an appropriate plaza, off the main lines of traffic. Our failure to grasp these "artistic fundamentals" accounts for the fact that elaborate civic centers like those of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Denver are somehow disappointing. Sitte enables us to understand that old Italian and German cities have charm, not because they are old and strange, but because they are right. And by driving away the demons Mass and Symmetry, he might help us recapture some of that Old World charm in our own modern surroundings, without any thought of pastiche. ALBERT GUERARD

FICTION IN REVIEW

NOWADAYS, when one is constantly amazed by the skill with which novelists who have nothing to say get the whole of it down on paper, it comes as something of a shock to find a novel like Merriam Modell's "The Sound of Years" (Simon and Schuster, $2.75), which has so much more potential content than its author has been able to communicate. Not that Miss Modell's book suffers from any obvious technical deficiencies. It is more than competently contrived and written. But Miss Modell, whose stories in

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the *New Yorker* have always suggested if not fully explored a psychological subtlety which sets them rather apart from the run of fiction in that magazine, has conceived for her first novel a psychological situation which is apparently beyond her present powers of projection. A book with a brave, bitterly valid basic idea can be read—I am afraid must be read—as simply a superior kind of comfortable entertainment. Its smooth execution quite hides the coarse grain of what I am sure was its original intention.

A few weeks ago, in reviewing Isaac Rosenfeld's "Passage from Home," I referred to E. E. Cummings's "And down they forgot as up they grew." The quotation is even more apposite to Miss Modell's novel than to Mr. Rosenfeld's. The clue to the fundamental conception of "The Sound of Years" is in its title. Here is the story of Ellen Cole, who, at twenty-one, might still have chosen between the line of her own youthful decency and generosity and the line of her unfeeling parents or of whom the fact that the choice had already been determined in favor of the parental direction could be discerned by only the most penetrating eye, but who, in maturity, has so accepted the parental way that it is as if the instincts of love and graciousness had never been. At thirty-eight, the potential rebel of seventeen years before may still parade the fashionable small flags of emancipation, but she has really become the very blood and spirit of educated conformity. She is married to a successful, highly ethical lawyer; she is the mother of a four-year-old exemplification of the best theories of child training; she is the mistress of a home built upon our most advanced and conscientious domestic principles. Indeed, Ellen might have been dreamed up in a conference between the editors of *Good Housekeeping* and *PM*. Beautifully even-tempered with her family, just friendly enough with servants and elevator boys, just enough against fascism and in favor of ration points, Miss Modell's heroine is virtually the archetype of modern progressive young womanhood. She meshes perfectly with the wheels of our present-day practical idealism—until, that is, she must meet the kind of emotional test with which it is the proper task of the novelist to confront such a nicely packaged product. The test of Ellen Cole is the sudden appearance in her life of Brigitta, the seventeen-year-old child of her youthful indiscretion, who has been raised by acquaintances abroad. It is in Ellen's behavior to Brigitta that we discover the lack of all imagination, the depths of self-interest, the real atrophy of heart that can lie behind a front of so much seeming decency, alertness, and humanitarianism.

But although this, I feel sure, is the story Miss Modell *meant* to search for its psychological and social truth—and I think she may even have intended a good deal of satire of manners in her devastatingly accurate picture of Ellen Cole's way of life—actually what she has got down on paper is neither meaningful research nor satire, but only a middling-thick "problem" novel: "What would you have done in Ellen's place?" as one reviewer can inquire. The discrepancy may be accounted for in several ways.

On the most superficial level it may be the result of an error in the formulation of Ellen's character. For if Ellen is to be regarded either as the embodiment of the moral and emotional degeneration to which all people are prone as they advance in years, or as the symbol of a section of society whose gifts of self-deception are particularly well developed and peculiarly dangerous, her conduct must be held strictly within the sphere of the normal. And it is not normal for a woman to desert her child at birth as Ellen did, and it is distinctly pathological for her to forget the child's existence for seventeen years. In the light of Ellen's emotional history, her coldness to Brigitta when the girl reappears has only a personal, clinical logic; it has no general reference.

Then, on a considerably deeper level, Miss Modell's failure to communicate what she set out to communicate can be ascribed to the imbalance between the quality of her human insights and the quality of her literary standards—for I have the impression that the author of "The Sound of Years" has seen and felt much better than she has read, that she lacks, not the courage of her knowledge of people, but a literary ideal which would allow her to be as courageous as so much insight requires. This lack reveals itself, for instance, in her style, which creates no overtones of analysis or comment but many and unmistakable overtones of *New Yorker* chic. (One compares the evocative style of Elizabeth Bowen's "The Death of the Heart," on a similar theme.)

Finally, on the deepest level of all, the inadequacy of Miss Modell's performance to her idea must be understood as the responsibility of the segment of our culture that produced it. For surely there is a sharp cultural significance in Miss Modell's relation to her heroine. I speak of the error of making Ellen so pathologically cold. But is this merely an accident of conception? Is it not, instead, the only means available to her author to separate herself from a central character with whom at all other points our culture presses her to be

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sympathetic? After all, our society imputes an unquestionable virtue to Ellen's kind of woman. It insists that anyone so social-minded, so domestically dutiful, so slim, so tastefully dressed, so literate, so unfrigid (in her head), so colloquial, so able to mock herself, is the best possible modern female thing. Miss Modell knows better. But where does our society give her an ideal to set against the Ellen ideal? What language does it teach her for attacking the plausible idiom of our Ellen Coles? To attempt a true destruction of the Ellen-image of modern woman would constitute a revolutionary cultural act—by extension perhaps even a revolutionary political act. Although Miss Modell is enough of an artist to have conceived such a purpose, she is not enough of an artist to have executed it. In the measure that she herself takes refuge in the same culture that provides a refuge for her heroine, her novel must inevitably miss stature.

I have been judging "The Sound of Years" by what it promises but falls short of achieving; to do less would be a grave injustice to a writer of Miss Modell's potentiality. This is not to say that the novel, even as it stands, is not in many ways unusually pleasing. The writing of the child Brigitta is entirely delightful; the handling of the subsidiary characters in the story is deft and satisfying. And almost all Miss Modell's reporting of manners is, more than proof of a sharp eye, proof of a mind able to penetrate well beneath the surfaces of deportment.

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Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

WITH a double bill composed of "Oedipus the King" and "The Critic" the Old Vic company has now offered the final items in the repertory to be presented during its current visit to the Century Theater. Sophocles has not generally been regarded as providing promising material for Broadway, but when the curtain fell on "Oedipus" Mr. Olivier and his fellows got the most tumultuous ovation yet accorded them and got it with good reason. Shakespeare has been successfully tested in the theaters hereabouts a good many times before; Chekov is well established as a locally viable playwright; but Sophocles had his New York reputation still to make, and the Old Vic company has helped him make it. It is using Yeats's straightforward, plain-spoken version, and the monstrous old story of primitive horrors, which was already archaic and far away when the play had its first night in Athens, comes alive again to stir atavistic terrors still leading subterranean lives in the hearts of a twentieth-century audience.

All the principal roles are well played, but the success of the presentation depends less upon individual performances than upon the fact that the general conception regarding the way in which the whole thing is to be set forth proves to be an effective one. It is stylized and ritualized to just the degree which the form as well as the spirit requires, and at the same time it is left human enough to make possible that partial empathy without which the action could have only a formal meaning external to ourselves. The stage setting is dominated by the two columns of Oedipus's palace rising at one side and by an ancient statue of a god whose primitive rather than Periclean face stares straight out into the eyes of the audience. That, I think, is precisely right, since it establishes the crucial fact that the story of Oedipus was old in theme and underlying meaning even when Sophocles used it for his play. Modern critics may discuss its modern, that is, its fifth-century, meaning. Oedipus, they say, was doomed by fate because his character—his pride and the heedless irascibility which made it inevitable that he would commit sometime and somewhere some dreadful, destroying mistake—*is* his fate. But that was as much a rationalization in Sophocles's day as it is in ours, a mere concession, as it were, to the "modernism" of Athens or New York. The real appeal of the play is not to the superficial layer of civilization on the Greek mind or the contemporary mind, but to the ancient substrata where Fate and Prophecy are still shuddering realities, and where the taboo against incest—about which Freud may quite possibly have sensed an important truth—is still unutterably significant. What's Oedipus to us or we to Oedipus? Rationally he is nothing, instinctively a great deal.

In "The Critic" Mr. Olivier switches from Oedipus to Mr. Puff, the publicist and dramatic author, Mr. Richardson from Tiresias to Lord Burleigh, whose wordless soliloquy is one of the high points of Mr. Puff's play; and Miss Redmond from one of Jocasta's attendants to the inevitable "confidant" of Puff's tragic heroine. But in a way it seems to me that their versatility is no more remarkable than the mental and emotional versatility of the human-being-as-spectator who can, in no less time, switch from the mood in which "Oedipus the King" means something to that in which "The Critic" means something also.

If the former can be successful because it was already timeless two thousand years ago, "The Critic" can be successful now because in certain quite definite respects it is still timely now—though of course somewhat less so—as it was timely in the seventeen-seventies. Plays about plays were then already a familiar genre; but except for "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" none of the earlier ones, not even the long popular "Rehearsal," would be actable today—not only because none has wit enough to keep it sweet but also because the satire and the burlesque have lost their point. Much that Sheridan satirizes is, on the other hand, still open to satire, and that is often true of even the little collateral subjects, such as Mrs. Dangle's reproof of her theater-mad husband for not reading in the newspapers: "There are letters every day . . . proving that the nation is utterly undone; but you never will read anything to entertain one." The publicist who makes it his business to get into the public prints little items of news which have a purpose not always openly confessed was just beginning to be the recognized force he still remains; drama criticism had only recently become a real influence on theatergoers; and a very pretty antiquarian study might be made to show how the point of Sheridan's burlesque on theatrical conventions remains a point because in his time as well as partly through his efforts the technique of playwriting was evolving in the direction of what it still remains.

Of all this the audience does not, of course, need to be consciously aware, for it merely feels the timeliness of Sheridan as it felt the timelessness of Sophocles. Quite obviously the company has a thoroughly good time in the performance, which begins on the level of high satire and grows progressively broader until it ends in rough and tumble when the scenery for the big spectacle in Mr. Puff's historical tragedy goes berserk in an episode which reminded at least one spectator of the big moment in the adventures of the Marx brothers behind the scenes of the opera. "Oedipus" purges the soul; "The Critic" tickles both the mind and the ribs.

Records

B. H. HAGGIN

OUTSTANDING on Victor's June list is the record (11-9172; $1) of Weber's Overture to "Der Freischutz," performed by Toscanini with the N. B. C. Symphony. The piece is a fine one; the performance presents it to us with characteristic plastic modeling, organic coherence and continuity, and dramatic force; and the record reproduces its sound excellently—all except the bass, which lacks depth and solidity.

Also outstanding is the record (11-9175; $1) of the superb duet of Violetta and Germont from Act 2 of Verdi's "Traviata," sung by Albanese and Merrill with an orchestra under Weissmann. It is the first part of the duet, *Dite alla giovine*, that I find superb; and first it is Albanese who amazes one with the vocal and musical art of her delivery of its sustained phrases; then it is Merrill who does so with the magnificence of the fresh voice that he uses with such discretion; and then it is the beautifully blended singing of the two. The record not only reproduces voices and orchestra excellently, but allows the orchestra to be heard clearly with the voices.

Any new recorded performances of Bach's "Brandenburg" Concertos have to meet the test of comparison with the ones that Adolf Busch's Chamber Players recorded in Europe a number of years ago; and I am sorry to have to report that the performances of Nos. 3 and 4 by part of the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky (Set 1050; $4.85)

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do not stand the comparison well. The Busch performance of the first movement of No. 3 has the lightness, clarity, and subtle inflection of playing by a small chamber group, and these qualities are preserved by recording which defines the sound clearly in live quiet; the Boston Symphony performance has the more massive and less flexible sound of a considerably larger group of strings in a reverberant empty auditorium. And to this difference there is added, in the last movement, a difference in pace that makes the Boston Symphony performance stodgy as compared with the brilliantly light-footed Busch. The first movement of No. 4 the Boston Symphony plays very beautifully—with lightness and delicacy and the exquisite sound of Laurent's flute; but Busch himself plays the violin part far better than Burgin, and the Busch group as a whole achieves a more integrated ensemble performance. And in the last movement there are again differences in sonority and pace which make the Boston Symphony performance opaque and stodgy where the Busch is clear and buoyant. The concertos take seven sides of the Victor set; and on the eighth is Pick-Mangiagalli's monstrous transcription for full orchestra of the great Prelude of Bach's E major Sonata for unaccompanied violin.

Two fine songs of Schumann, "Stille Tränen" and "Der Nussbaum," are sung by Marian Anderson with Rupp at the piano (11-9173; $1). Anderson's singing is again uneven—with some tones that are opulent, but with more that are dry and metallic and not absolutely on pitch. Rupp provides it with contexts that are exciting in their beauty of sound and musical life, and that are reproduced in their proper relation to the singing.

Having issued performances by Toscanini and Koussevitzky on its new plastic records, Victor now issues one by Stokowski—of Brahm's First Symphony, recorded this time with the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra (Set V-4; $10.85). It is a performance that brings out the worst of this dreadful work, intensifying what is excessive to start with. The orchestra is quite a good one; and its sound is richly reproduced, but blurred occasionally by reverberation in the empty auditorium.

I still have not been able to hear the new phonographs.

And finally, most of the tunes, lyrics, sketches, humor, dances and performances are good enough to make "Call Me Mister"—even with bad things like the second-act ballet and the Jules Munshin burlesque of Maurice Evans—one of the best musical shows of recent years. But "Annie Get Your Gun" has nothing but a few good lyrics that provide Ethel Merman with material for her very efficient technique of being very funny.

Films

JAMES AGEE

IN "The Blue Dahlia" a newly discharged veteran, Alan Ladd, spends a busy night raking the Hollywood half-world for the killer of his wife, whom he didn't much want anyhow. He becomes involved with a motel house dick, the deskman of a mean hotel, a couple of gunmen, a night-club proprietor, some detectives, and Veronica Lake, among others; and they and the sets and moods they move through all seem to me convincing and entertaining in a dry, nervous, electric way. John McManus of *PM* has recently objected to this and similar seamy melodramas, accusing Hollywood of neglecting to make films which can possibly interest, open, or influence honest minds on any social or political issue. I agree that the job has been neglected, and there is a good deal in that line that I wish was being done. But I don't think that is a criterion for good movies; I feel there is at least as much to be dreaded as desired in American films taking up such editorial "responsibilities" instead of just leaving it to Harry Warner and Eric Johnston to sound off about them; and I hope there will be more films of the quality of "The Blue Dahlia," rather than fewer. The picture is as neatly stylized and synchronized, and as uninterested in moral excitement, as a good ballet; it knows its own weight and size perfectly and carries them gracefully and without self-importance; it is, barring occasional victories and noble accidents, about as good a movie as can be expected from the big factories. In its own uninsistent way, for that matter, it does carry a certain amount of social criticism. For it crawls with American types; and their mannerisms and affectations, and their chief preoccupations—blackmail and what's-in-it-for-me—all seem to me to reflect, however coolly, things that are deeply characteristic of this civilization.

"Her Kind of Man" is the same kind of thing, done, however, with much less taste and style, an ounce or two of uninteresting interest in cause and motive, and an apparent desire, in which to a mild extent it clumsily succeeds, to present the world of gambling and show-business of the Year of Repeal as both attractive and repellent.

"Cluny Brown" is a comedy about English snobbism on three levels; county family, backstairs, and lower middle class. For good measure there is also a plumber who, despite his loyalty to the labor ticket, wears a bustle on his brain. There are also a couple of patrician liberals, fatuously melodramatic in their eagerness to protect an anti-fascist refugee, Charles Boyer, from assassination. I would think better of the pasting of this kind of liberal, richly deserved as it is, if it had been done at a less safe time. All this social kidding turns on a housemaid, Jennifer Jones, who can never remember for long what is meant by knowing one's place. One main difficulty is that comedies about snobbism seem, as a rule, to depend on stimulating and playing up to, rather than shriveling, the worst kinds of snobbism in the audience. In spite of this, Ernst Lubitsch's direction—always, at its best, so shrewd about protocol—makes the film more amusing than there was any other reason to expect; and Richard Haydn's performance as a prissily bullying, mother-bound druggist is very nice caricature.

In "Without Reservations" Claudette Colbert, another kidded liberal, learns more about life in the course of a trans-continental romp with a couple of men in uniform, John Wayne and Don DeFore. Messrs. Wayne and DeFore have kinds of hardness and conceit, in their relations with women, which are a good deal nearer the real thing than movies usually get. A predatory toots is repeatedly spoken of as a beetle, a good word for the kind which I had heard of, before, only as German slang. Miss Colbert does another of those tipsiness acts of hers which do more toward reducing me to Pepsi-Cola than any number of Lost Weekends ever could. The whole business is fairly smooth and spirited without attaining to any of the charm, or for that matter much of the corn, of "It Happened One Night." One thing I really enjoyed in it was the flooding of landscapes past the train windows, which were the most satisfying—if not nearly satisfying enough—that I remember seeing in an American movie. I was also glad to see Mervyn Leroy destroy the Hollywood convention which forbids shooting such things as a scene in a railway coach in such a way that the

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landscape moves now left-to-right, now right-to-left. And late in the film Louella Parsons appears, in person, at her microphone, also in person, with all the bewildering force of a chenille sledgehammer.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Angell: Distorted

Dear Sirs: If one were looking for examples of how facts can be distorted, Sir Norman Angell's article, Leftism in the Atomic Age (*The Nation*, May 11), would make a perfect exhibit. Almost the entire article is based on half-facts and speciousness. . . .

Angell refers to the constant warning of Stalin and other Russian leaders concerning the threat of Western capitalist powers. His implication plainly is that this threat is unfounded. Possibly he has not seen the latest Gallup poll, showing that most Americans believe there will be a third world war in the next generation. And guess with whom.

A. H. PERON

Chicago, May 15

Angell: Disillusioned

Dear Sirs: I did as requested—read Sir Norman first, then *The Nation's* comment. This was merely technical observance, since I was in Geneva to hear Sir Norman despair in 1937. He has written cogently in *Free World* since then, with deceptive show of the ancient wisdom, but he is a disillusioned man and—what is no disparagement—so typically an Englishman in his espousal of gradualism that he cannot sympathize with the rebellion of his own countrymen, a healthy and worldwide symptom that the old order changeth. . . .

DOROTHY HOWELLS

New York, May 9

Angell: He Was Right

Dear Sirs: I cannot understand why you devote a whole page in *The Nation* to a dissenting opinion on Sir Norman Angell's article when your attack on him seems to be entirely due to his merely *implying* that we did not fight the war for the primary purpose of establishing a new social order. Well, we didn't. America fought because she was attacked and England because it was obvious that she would be, after Hitler had conquered and occupied every country in continental Europe.

What your argument in rebuttal of Angell amounts to is a labored defense of Russia's actions both prior to and since the war, and of Communists in other countries, and their fellow-travelers like Professor Laski, whose speech at *The Nation* dinner might as well have come from the lips of Molotov. . . . •

HANSON LEWIS

New York, May 14

Angell: Stimulating

Dear Sirs: Please spare us the rush of words to the page exemplified by the editorial What Did We Fight For? It is discouraging to us unfortunate capitalists who are trying to find out what we did fight for and are completely baffled by such a running around in circles.

To one of my simple mind Norman Angell's Leftism in the Atomic Age was informative, stimulating, and encouraging. Certainly it was no Taftish argument for "free enterprise." But I am afraid that when it indicated that not every single step ever taken by Russia had been perfect, straightforward, and honest, it upset you too much. A second thought would have reminded you that no single government in the world's history has ever been thoroughly honest and straightforward.

I am for letting Russia be Communist or whatever else it chooses to be. I am for letting England decide what it wants to be. And I am likewise for letting the United States decide what *it* wants to be, without having that decision made in Moscow, London, or Madrid.

I agree completely with Angell's statement of the situation in the next to the last paragraph of his article. Congratulations on running it. And let's have some editorials that would not indicate that everything capitalists do is always wrong and everything Russia does is right.

FLOYD J. MILLER

Royal Oak, Mich., May 18

[The editors recommend that Messrs. Lewis and Miller give the editorial in question a second and more careful reading—particularly that section which reads: "Nor have we ever suggested that the problem (of misunderstanding between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union) can be solved simply by saying 'yes' to all Russia's demands and proposals and so achieving 'unity.' It is as disastrous to assume with the Stalinists that all dissenting positions of the democracies are further evidence of the anti-Soviet conspiracy as it is to assume with our civilian and military reactionaries that war with Russia must come and we had better get ready."]

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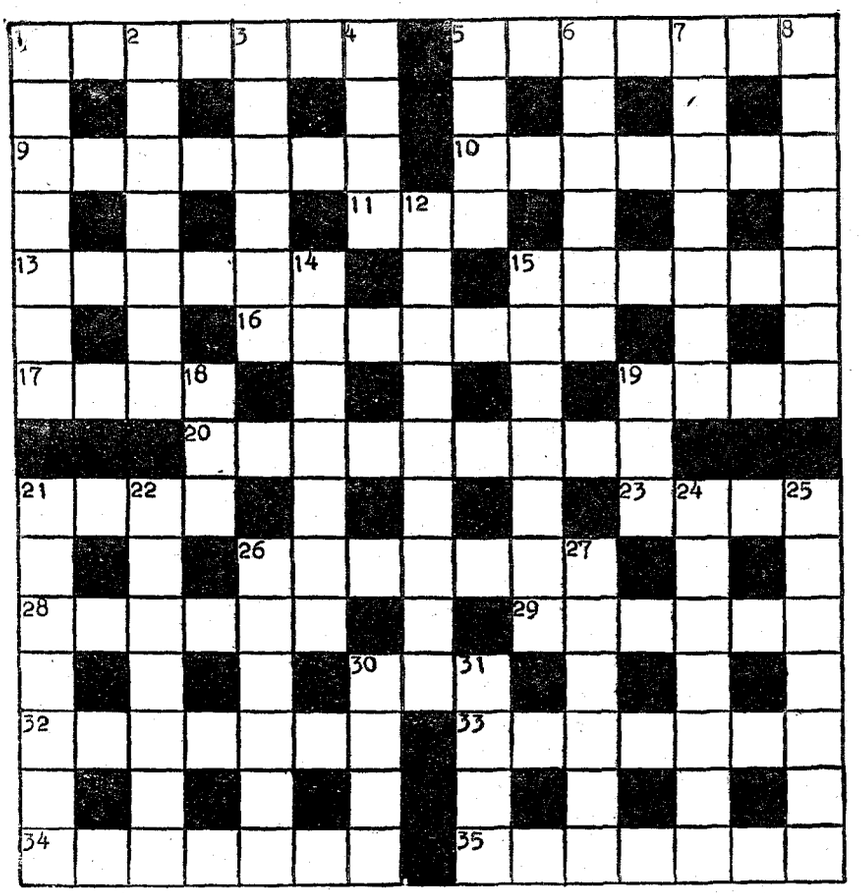
Crossword Puzzle No. 164

By JACK BARRETT



ACROSS

1 A fishy sort of woman
5 Kind of eucalyptus (two words, 4 and 3)
9 Book of the Pentateuch
10 Aren't obelisks darn things?
11 Sounds more like you than me, doesn't it?
13 Let go
15 Good-humored but eccentric captain in Dickens' *Dombey and Son*
16 Of local interest in the Capitol
17 An Amazonian kind of rubber
19 A liar in retreat
20 Give a friend a piece of furniture that is to his taste
21 Everybody should be able to draw this
23 Biblical king who walked delicately
26 Leap in the trap
28 U.S.S. Leo (anag.)
29 Salad herb I've put an end to
30 Dew you pronounce it do?
32 Tummy trouble, perhaps
33 A tall, cool drink—but not for the toper! (two words, 4 and 3)
34 Students taking them are not markedly hot or cold
35 "'Tis not in mortals to command success, But we'll do more . . . we'll ------- it"

DOWN

1 One educated beyond his intellect
2 A big stockman out West, perhaps
3 Describes a sailor away on a mission
4 Tragic Italian actress
5 Precious, in fiction
6 Serviceable
7 Statue (by Pygmalion) that came to life
8 Different kind of rubber to 17
12 A watch should be kept on this (5-4)
14 Lumps
15 Hardly the sort of rose for a buttonhole
18 Less petulant and mischievous than the monkey
19 The lowing herd wound slowly over it, in the elegy
21 "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the ------- his spots?" (Well, it can move from one spot to another)
22 Making a home in the bush
24 Brilliancy
25 Missive delivered by hand which comes as a bombshell
26 Floodgate
27 Angna goes in
30 Changes color
31 Coil, and sounds like what the unhappy dog did

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 163

ACROSS:—1 WIVES; 6 UPPER; 9 INGRAIN; 10 GRAIN; 11 WRING; 12 GUYROPE; 16 SODDEN; 19 ILL-USE; 22 ARMADILLO; 23 ITIS; 24 PAVE; 25 HORSEWHIP; 26 WINE; 27 ELLA; 28 ROISTERER; 31 CHASTE; 33 DASHES; 36 ADDRESS; 39 YOKEL; 40 IDIOM; 41 GRECIAN; 42 ENEMY; 43 GUSTY.

DOWN:—1 WAGES; 2 VIAND; 3 SINGER; 4 UGLY; 5 SAGO; 6 UNWELL; 7 POILU; 8 ROGUE; 13 UNMARRIED; 14 RED-LETTER; 15 PILCHARDS; 17 OSTRICH; 18 DASHES; 20 LOPPERS; 21 SEVILLE; 29 OTALGY; 30 EASING; 31 CLYDE; 32 ANKLE; 34 HEIRS; 35 SAMMY; 37 DIET; 38 EPIC.

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